Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 9:19 AM
To: Smith; Lynne M (GOV)
Subject: FW: Weekly News Bulletin: Jul. 10-16, 2008

From: Waste Business Journal [mailto:info@wastebusinessjournal.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2008 11:06 PM
To: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)
Subject: Weekly News Bulletin: Jul. 10-16, 2008

If you are having trouble viewing this email, you may **see it online.**

Waste Business Journal Weekly News Bulletin: Jul. 10-16, 2008

HEADLINES...

1. **Allied Waste Launches National Partnership With RecycleBank**
2. **City of Detroit Will Not Buy Waste-to-Energy Plant, Wait and See**
3. **Allied Waste Seeks State Help with Giant Sunshine Canyon Landfill**
4. **Barnwell Low-Level Nuclear Site to Close to Most Outsiders**
5. **Plasco Energy Gets City Approval for 400 TPD Plasma Conversion Plant**
6. **Stoller Corp. Awarded $18.5M Contract Extension for Hanford Cleanup**
7. **Allied Waste to Release Second Quarter on July 30**
8. **Covanta Holding to Release Second Quarter on July 29**
9. **Waste Connections to Release Second Quarter on July 22**
10. **Waste Services to Release Second Quarter on July 22**

The weekly news bulletin is a service of **Waste Business Journal.** WBJ provides research and analysis of the waste industry. To learn more, please visit: **www.wastebusinessjournal.com.**

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Please feel free to forward this bulletin to your colleagues.

1. **ALLIED WASTE LAUNCHES NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP WITH RECYCLEBANK**

   Allied Waste Industries and RecycleBank announced a strategic partnership to launch a nationwide recycling incentive program. The partnership is expected to pair Allied's seven million residential customers with RecycleBank's program that rewards households that recycle with points which can be redeemed for gift certificates and discounts to more than 400 brand name national and local retailers across the country or even donated to charity. Allied and RecycleBank hope to add at least a million new customers to the program by the end of next year. Allied's participation is another important vote of confidence in RecycleBank's approach. Last year, Coca Cola became a partner and invested about $2 million in the program. In April of this year, RecycleBank secured a $30 million investment from leading venture firm Kleiner, Perkins, Caulfield and Byers, and others...**Read More »**

2. **CITY OF DETROIT WILL NOT BUY WASTE-TO-ENERGY PLANT, WAIT AND SEE**

   Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick said that the city will not buy the waste-to-energy plant which has processed nearly two thirds of the city's 550,000 tons of waste per year since it was built in 1991. That decision follows last month's decision not to renew its lease with Covanta Energy which operates the plant. Instead, the city seems to favor increased recycling efforts and landfill disposal. However, there are many obstacles, not the least of which is the high cost of deploying recycling programs in a city that is only recycling an estimated 8% of its waste stream. Also, a contract provision exists that says the plant owner, Energy Investors Funds of Boston, which bought a majority interest in it this year, can require waste be brought to the plant if it can match or beat bids from local landfill operators. The rising cost of landfill disposal together with high fuel costs to transport waste there tips the balance in favor of the waste-to-energy plant...**Read More »**

3. **ALLIED WASTE SEEKS STATE HELP WITH GIANT SUNSHINE CANYON LANDFILL**

   Amid disagreement between the city and county of Los Angeles over how to oversee the giant Sunshine Canyon landfill that straddles both jurisdictions, the landfill's owner, Allied Waste has been forced to appeal its case all the way to the California Integrated Waste Management Board. The landfill which consists of two sites, one in the city of Los Angeles, the other in unincorporated county territory, would like to consolidate the two so that it can accept 12,100 tons of waste per day but has been required to operate them separately until the city and county form a joint agency to oversee it. Local officials are keen to keep control over the landfill which has been controversial for its proximity to residents, and reservoirs. With space running out on the city side and foot-dragging by local officials, Allied was forced to take its case to the state which last week agreed to oversee the landfill until a joint agency is established...**Read More »**

4. **BARNWELL LOW-LEVEL NUCLEAR SITE TO CLOSE TO MOST OUTSIDERS**

   Utah-based EnergySolutions is preparing to close its low-level nuclear waste disposal site in Barnwell County, SC to all but South Carolina, New Jersey and Connecticut. That site has accepted waste from around the country for nearly 40 years, but political pressure led to an agreement in 2000 to limit those shipments, despite local support including Barnwell County. County officials are concerned about the loss of jobs and host fee revenue...**Read More »**

5. **PLASCO ENERGY GETS CITY APPROVAL FOR 400 TPD PLASMA CONVERSION PLANT**

   The City of Ottawa, Ont. approved plans to allow Plasco Energy Group to build, own and operate a 400 tonne-per-day waste conversion plant that will process municipal solid waste that would otherwise be destined for a landfill. The process employs plasma torches that heat and gasify the waste to produce both a synthetic gas and an inert slag material. The clean burning synthetic gas will be combusted to produce about 21 MW of electricity. In return for building and funding the plant, Plasco will be paid $60 per tonne of waste processed, escalated to reflect CPI over a 20-year contract...**Read More »**

6. **STOLLER CORP. AWARDED $18.5M CONTRACT EXTENSION FOR HANFORD CLEANUP**

   Colorado-based Stoller Corporation, an environmental, waste management firm announced that it had won a two-year, $18.5 million contract extension for management of the disposal facility at the abandoned Hanford nuclear site in Washington. The Hanford Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF) has been receiving waste from the cleanup project since 1996, and handles about one million tons of low-level radioactive material each year. Stoller received its first $18 million contract to manage the disposal facility in March 2006...**Read More »**

7. **ALLIED WASTE TO RELEASE SECOND QUARTER ON JULY 30**

   Allied Waste Industries said that it will report second quarter financial results at the close of the market on Wednesday, July 30 and host a conference call at 5 p.m. (Eastern) that afternoon...**Read More »**

8. **COVANTA HOLDING TO RELEASE SECOND QUARTER ON JULY 29**

   Covanta Holding Corp. plans to release its second quarter financial results at the close of the market on July 29 and host a conference call the following day at 8:30 a.m. (Eastern)...**Read More »**

9. **WASTE CONNECTIONS TO RELEASE SECOND QUARTER ON JULY 22**

   Waste Connections said that it will report second quarter financial results at the close of the market on July 22. The company will host a

conference call the following day at 8:30 a.m. (Eastern) to discuss those results...**Read More »**

10. **WASTE SERVICES TO RELEASE SECOND QUARTER ON JULY 22**
Waste Services, Inc. said it plans to release second quarter results at the close of markets on Tuesday, July 22 and hold a conference call the following day at 8:30 a.m. (Eastern) to discuss them...**Read More »**

Waste Market Overview & Outlook

The Waste Market Overview examines the industry top to bottom covering waste generation, collection, processing, recovery and disposal by revenue and volume. The report details the relationship of past and future pricing to capacity and demand for disposal, and shows the increasing role of the private sector. Waste equipment and the emerging importance of e-waste, C&D recovery, food wastes, tires and medical wastes are examined.

- Market Revenues by Segment
- Waste Generation, Recovery and Disposal by Volume and Revenue
- Collection, Processing and Disposal Markets
- Geographic Distribution of the Market
- Other Waste Management Segments & Emerging Markets
- Competition in Waste Among the Major Players
- Resource Recovery Markets by Commodity
- Waste Management Equipment

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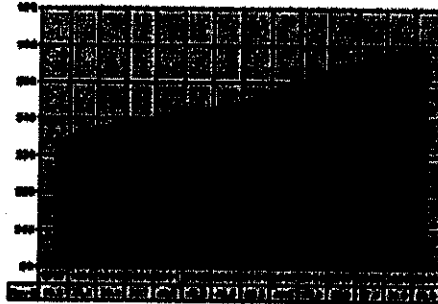
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Email **thompson@wastebusinessjournal.com.**

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Although WBJ has made every effort to be accurate, errors may appear and are unintentional.

Unknown

From: Colberg, Talis J (LAW) [/O=SOA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=TJCOLBERG]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 11:26 AM

To: 'gov.sarah@yahoo.com'

Subject: FW: status on Larry Persily

Dear Governor Palin,
The email below may be of interest to you or you may know something of it already.
The email is in regard to an ongoing effort by the Alaska Rural Justice and Law Commission (of which I am automatically a member – it is the federally funded commission on rural justice in Alaska) to recruit a new executive director. Bruce Botehlo is also on the commission and has been approaching various people to apply for the position. Bruce had approached Larry Persily. What may be of interest to you here is reason given by Larry as to why he has declined to apply for the commission position as executive director. He wants to "take an active outspoken role in state oil and gas, energy, finance and/or policy issues." This is consistent with the one personal meeting I had with Larry in DC in March when he expressed to me his frustration with his job because he had to set aside his opinions to do his work. Perhaps you already know what his plans are. This implies he has plans to be a visible commentator soon. Talis

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From: BotelhoB [mailto:BotelhoB@ci.juneau.ak.us]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 11:17 AM
To: Torgerson, James E.; gschubert@inuitservices.com; Colberg, Talis J (LAW); Cohen, Nelson (USAAK)
Subject: status on Larry Persily

Folks, Larry wrote to follow up on the meeting I had with him about the ED position two weeks ago and to let me know that he will not be applying for the position. He said in part: I've decided not to apply for the Justice Commission job. I appreciate that you asked, but I believe what I really want to do next is take an active, outspoken role in state oil and gas, energy, finance and/or policy issues.

Bruce

Unknown

From: gov.sarah@yahoo.com
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 6:01 AM
To: Stapleton; Meghan N (DNR)
Cc: Perry; Kristina Y (GOV); Leighow; Sharon W (GOV)
Subject: Re: Senator Stevens comments tomorrow

Meg/Sharon: Excellent, I agree he doesn't need to be seen as too cozy for a perceived political reason. Thanks so much for the excellent work here with his staffers, this should go a long way. (That, and your amazing ability to mandate another indictment at just the right time... :))

Sent from my BlackBerry device from Cellular One

From: "Stapleton, Meghan N (DNR)" <meghan.stapleton@alaska.gov>
Date: Thu, 10 Jul 2008 21:52:42 -0800
To: ExternalEmailgsp<gov.sarah@yahoo.com>
CC: Perry, Kristina Y (GOV)<kris.perry@alaska.gov>; Leighow, Sharon W (GOV) <sharon.leighow@alaska.gov>
Subject: FW: Senator Stevens comments tomorrow

Governor,

Following a couple of conversations with Aaron Saunders in Senator Stevens' office, I received a final phone call tonight regarding the Senator's expected comments tomorrow before the legislature. Essentially, the Senator is saying everything that I asked for on your behalf, except for an all-out endorsement of AGIA. At this point, Aaron says that the Senator doesn't want to jump "into the fray." He also doesn't want to have it appear as though he's doing the speech just for AGIA and for political purposes (to continue the "love fest and just "buddy up" to buddy up).

While the Senator is editing his speech right now, Aaron expects the following to be conveyed during the course of the speech:

- Senator will thank the Governor for advancing the ball re: the natural gas pipeline and for her bold leadership on the issue (Senator will not delve specifically into AGIA).
- Senator will acknowledge and thank the Governor for progressing the gasline further than it has ever gone before.
- Senator will ask the legislature to quickly pass the Governor's short-term energy plan, including both the energy rebates and the state gas tax suspension. He hopes that quiets the conservative outcry. He likes both ideas very much.
- Senator will say that he is supportive of the Governor's leadership on both issues (AGIA and short-term plan).

As you will see in the note below, the email follows our phone conversation and includes many of these elements.

Thanks,
Meghan

From: Saunders, Aaron (Stevens) [mailto:Aaron_Saunders@stevens.senate.gov]
Sent: Thu 7/10/2008 9:18 PM

To: Stapleton, Meghan N (DNR)
Subject: Senator Stevens comments tomorrow

Hi Meg - in the most recent draft this is what Senator Stevens plans to say about the Gov. He didn't want to get jump into the fray on AGIA but wanted to give your boss credit:

"I also congratulate the Governor for her leadership to move this project further than we have seen in our state's history."

Now, the speech continues to change by the minute but I expect the Senator to support the Gov wholeheartedly. I know he will back her energy relief proposal and ask the Legislature to swiftly pass it.

That said, specific language continues to change but you can count on my boss to back yours.

Hope this helps. I'm on my way to Chicago! Take care,

Aaron

Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Device

Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 9:02 AM
To: Mason; Janice L (GOV)
Subject: FW: Meeting with HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt 7/22 4:30 pm

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From: Whitfield, James (HHS/OS) [mailto:James.Whitfield@HHS.GOV]
Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2008 3:01 PM
To: Mason, Janice L (GOV)
Cc: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)
Subject: Meeting with HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt 7/22 4:30 pm

Janice,

Per our discussion yesterday, Secretary Leavitt will be doing some meetings and site visits in Alaska July 22, 23, and 24. We are hoping to schedule a meeting between the Secretary and the Governor while he is there. He can be in Juneau for meetings, if that works best for the Governor. Given previously expressed concerns about early morning availability, the Secretary's current schedule has him available in Juneau at 4:30 for an hour. The format of the meeting would be an informal discussion regarding health care reform issues and any other issues that the Governor may be interested in. The Secretary would also like to publicly convey an award to the Governor for Alaska being one of the winners of the President's Fitness Challenge (http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2008pres/06/20080610d.html). This could be done in the Governor's office building at 5:00 with interested, participants, staff and invited media, if the governor desires.

There is still a small amount of flexibility in the Secretary's schedule on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th both in Juneau and Anchorage, so please feel free to make suggestions about times that might better work for the Governor. I can be reached most readily at 206/788-6465.

Thank you.

James Whitfield
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
James.Whitfield@HHS.gov

Unknown

From: PAUL KENDALL [pauldkendall@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 10:08 AM
To: wjhickel@gci.net
Cc: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored); Colberg; Talis J (LAW); Irwin; Tom E (DNR); Galvin; Patrick S (DOR); Rutherford; Marty K (DNR)
Subject: AGIA and the need for a scoping or preliminary Energy Forum For Anchorage alone

Date: 7-11-08 Fri

To: Mr. Hickel; And all parties public and private

Thank you and Mr. Roberts for your many community contributions and involvements.

It is my "presumption in good faith" that Our Govenors team and public servants as guardians of our resource development and values are in the process of instituting a long overdue policy formation for several reasons....; And, upon conclusion of this policy construct or design, our leaders will adjust AGIA for its many possible and potential avenues of "in Alaskas' best interests" designs. (a lot of them to look at)

I understand the the key phrase is "presumption in good faith", and in this case i feel compelled to convey my faith and trust in these guardians of our assets to do the right thing....in the end.

This is a "big pipe of information" issue undertaking when you get next to it so i won't belabor my position with further dialog...

HOWEVER:

Please, Mr. Hickel and Mr. Roberts

I would beseach you to call for a public (5 day long 10hour days-panels up and panels down) on live camera, an Anchorage Energy Forum discussion.

This needs to happen right away. I believe Mr. Haagensons AEA/AIDEA is planning some kind of unfolding event around December.. This if way too far out ....or at least we need to begin to see what we have here.

We need to shake the bushes now... Energy is the center of the Universe in its relevance and needs...

We as a society have truly missed the boat in reference to our home energy needs and techonologies along with who owns them and their development; And we need to tackle this matter now... not in December....(at the very least,,, for Anchorage area alone)

We need to begin to see who is where on all energy matters. Now!

And of course, my main concern is with Residential, or as the census bureau calls them

Housing Units... of which the census bureau estimated 260,460 in 2000 .

Thank You all for your many contributions to a better society....

Paul D. Kendall

land line msg 222-7882

now cell 884-2424

E-mail pauldkendall@yahoo.com

PS

Mr. Haymes of Exxon Mobile, on camera, called this undertaking "the largest project on the planet"

Given, that is the case, i would suggest to you and all of us that we should feel compelled to rise in kind to the occassion in areas around this project....and that is where my interests are at!

Alaska can be a new next great Energy Based Society; And this new society will bring things "a site to behold", "the stuff dreams are made of", "true indivudal free will freedoms",

and an abundance of potential free enterprise opportunities...

Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 10:06 AM
To: Mason; Janice L (GOV)
Subject: FW: DV Task Force Meeting

From: Kelly Marre [mailto:kellym@akafs.org]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 9:03 AM
To: 'Angella Long'; 'Betsy Woodin'; Adams, Beth C (ACS); 'Becky Bellamy'; 'Burnett, Jenna (Stevens)'
Subject: DV Task Force Meeting

Just a reminder that our DV Task Force meeting will be meeting next **Wednesday, July 16th at 8:00 a.m**. The meeting lasts about one hour. Please come prepared to share ideas about working with other professionals and community members to assist and provide services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well ideas & thoughts about holding perpetrators more accountable. Feel free to invite others to participate in this group.
I will be out of the office on Monday and Tuesday, so please call Judy Gette @ 746-6249 if you have any questions.
Kelly

Kelly Marre, B.H.S.
Crisis Intervention Coordinator
Alaska Family Services
746-6273 direct line
746-6172 fax

Unknown

From: Bruce D Webb [bwebb@aurorapower.com]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 9:46 AM

To: ddonkel@cfl.rr.com

Cc: Leighow; Sharon W (GOV); Nizich; Michael A (GOV); Palin; Sarah H (GOV); Balash; Joseph R (GOV); Jim White; 'Jim Gottstein'; Rick in Fairbanks; nickstepo@gmail.com

Subject: Hello, hello.... is anybody home?

Dan,

That was the Governor's auto response. I have received a dozen of them over the past year.

Nice letter, but I am afraid it is being delivered to deaf ears. I am starting to wonder what the Governor's agenda is, as she , and particularly Joe Balash, have NEVER replied to me, and I sent Joe a message last week – asking him directly what his purpose was, because I have been including him in all the oil and gas e-mails that deal with the injustices being propogated in several departments. I seriously do not have any idea what his role in State government is. I made it a return receipt and "notify when read" e-mail. He got it, read it, and of course, ignored it. (attached) I offered to sit down with him over coffee and discuss his role, what he could do for me,and I would have asked him if there was any way I could help him. I wanted to know whether or not I was wasting his time by including him in all the e-mails. Apparently I am.

Sarah is most likely devoting the majority of her time in justifying her AGIA legislation, which is now being countered not only by ConocoPhillips with the Denali proposal, but by Governor Knowles with a different approach, and Governor Hickel with yet another. The woes of the Independents are insignificant in comparrison to what the majors are delivering and what a gas line would mean to Alaskans – it's sad but true. We just don't matter enough to be heard. All we can do is keep trying, unfortunately, after trying for so many years – we start sounding like fanatics – which adds to the administrations desire to ignore us.

This is especially frustrating for me, having served within the Stae for over 20 years, more than half of which in the Division of Oil and Gas. I have the unique experience of knowing the "process" from the inside looking out, and now - after almost four years of oil and gas consulting and managing the land and regulatory affairs for one of the only independents in Alaska still managing t survive - from the outside looking. I can point out a hundred deficiencies and ambiuities in State regulations that would be EASY to fix and make the "process" more fair and condusive for competition and exploration. The problem lies in that it serves no ones political agenda to change things. The administration(s) would rather focus their attention on "NEW" legislation and administrative process that will focus the spotlight on them and their prospective acheivements, instead of fixing the old statutes and regulations that create and propogate the problems.

In several discussions with you, Jim, Rick and others, I have come to the conclusion that if we want to change things, we are going to have to start a public awareness campaign and educate the people of Alaska. Only when we are able to bring these issues out in the open to the general public and compete for the "spotlight" with AGIA. Denali, ACES, and the litany of other "important" issues, will we be noticed and taken seriously. Check out this website:

http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/LEGISLATURE/ombud/standarz.htm

There are 16 standards that the State Ombudsman uses to investigate complaints against state officials, departments and Divisions. I was in a meeting yesterday with the DCOM, DOG, F&G, DEC and COE. 12 of those 16 standards were violated. Once a complaint is filed with the Ombudsman, they MUST investigate it, and publish it on their website. Perhaps it is time to start using the State's own system to bring these issues to the forefront – and everytime a complaint is filed, copy all the media agencies in the

state... this would cost us nothing. More than half of these standards are relevant in the Corsair Unit Expansion Decision alone.

Anyway, I have ranted anbout my disappointment with the administration enough. I hope the weather and view in Florida is making you smile.

Take care,

-Bruce

From: ddonkel@cfl.rr.com [mailto:ddonkel@cfl.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 1:04 AM
To: Kari Spencer; Sarah Palin; Governor Sarah Palin; Governor Palin; Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)
Cc: Jim Winegarner; Bob & Faith Warthen; Tom Walsh; Bill VanDyke; Stan Snyder; Pat Shaw; Senator_Thomas_Wagoner@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Lyda_Green@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Lesil_McGuire@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Gary_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Charlie_Huggins@legis.state.ak.us; Senator_Bert_Stedman@legis.state.ak.us; Robert Pledger; Dorothy Pledger; David W. Lappi; joe.balash@alaska.gov; Stuart Doshi; rep.david.guttenberg@legis.state.ak.us; Kevin_Banks; Vladimir Katic; jimwhite; Rick Wagner; Jerry Hodgden; Bruce D. Webb; Lt. Gov. Parnell; David Boelens
Subject: Re: Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges: FBI investigations into Alaska politics | adn.com

Dear Gov. Palin or Who ever replied. I hope this was not a computer responds you sent to my letter below!

Why have I never received one responds from the Governor on these oil and gas matters after almost a hundred letters from me to help stop oil and gas corruption in Alaska and help cause fair competition in Alaska from small oil companies against the Majors?

Have you reviewed your oil and gas lease sales history and have you noted that my "Danco" companies or I (DANIEL K. DONKEL) have been one of Alaska's largest and longest (since 1983) oil and gas lease customers in many Cook Inlet lease sales and on the North Slope?

Have you also noted that I helped with others indirectly cause millions of barrels of new oil production in the Cook Inlet at Redoubt Shoals oil and gas field that created many Alaskan jobs and royalty and other valuable income to the State for benefit all Alaskans?

Also, do you know I have supported, along with Rick Wagner and others, Gov. Palin's efforts to help Alaska to be more oil and gas productive and have tried for decades to help increase oil and gas competition from the small oil and gas companies that have been apparently shut out of Alaska profit making business for decades by the State's subject oil and gas corruption or injustice?

Can I ask one favor? If yes, then may I ask that Rick Wagner, Bruce D. Webb, Paul Craig, David Boelens, Jerry Hodgden, Jim White and me (if all are agreeable / others may be included if they are schedulable) to meet with Gov. Palin to find solutions to this oil and gas corruption and bad oil and gas laws that has keep small oil companies and Alaskans from competition profitably for well over three decades?

We are all small Alaskan oil men with well over one hundred year of combined Alaska oil and gas experience and we only want one hour to meet with Gov. Palin to talk about this subject corruption and how the small oil and gas competitors can benefit Alaska just as they do in

Kansas and many other producing oil State's in the lower 48 and Canada.

May I respectfully ask for a meaningful and respectful response of a simple "yes" or "no" to have this group or any one from this group meet with Gov. Sarah Palin for one hour by phone or in person to help Alaskans and small oil companies drill and produce more oil and gas for our nation?

Daniel K. Donkel
Ph: 386-226-4344
Cell: 407-375-8500
Fax: 386-252-3703
ddonkel@cfl.rr.com
546 Rio Vista Ave.
Daytona Beach, Florida 32114

----- Original Message -----
From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)
To: ddonkel@cfl.rr.com
Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2008 5:28 PM
Subject: RE: Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges: FBI investigations into Alaska politics | adn.com

Thank you for writing to Alaska Governor Sarah Palin. The concerns, opinions, and/or information you have sent are important and valuable to the Governor. Although she is unable to respond to each and every email herself, your message has been received and is being reviewed by the appropriate staff person in this office who can best address your need, suggestion, or comment.

From: ddonkel@cfl.rr.com [mailto:ddonkel@cfl.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2008 1:22 PM
To: Banks, Kevin R (DNR); Alfred James; irvin.t.joy@poa02.usace.army.mil; Chris Brecht; Danny S. Davis; Rick Wagner; Vladimir Katic; jimwhite; Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored); Palin, Sarah H (GOV); Paul L. Craig; Bruce D. Webb; David Boelens
Cc: Senator_Thomas_Wagoner@legis.state.ak.us; Green, Lyda N (LAA); McGuire, Lesil L (LAA); Stevens, Gary L (LAA); Huggins, Charlie (LAA); Wielechowski, Bill (LAA); Stedman, Bert K (LAA); Richard A. Fineberg; Vladimir Katic; Balash, Joseph R (GOV); James Gottstein; Jerry Hodgden
Subject: Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges: FBI investigations into Alaska politics | adn.com

Dear Gov. Palin and Friends

Please read the subject "BREAKING NEWS",

"Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges: FBI investigations into Alaska politics" | adn.com

Then read some solutions below. We want to give Gov. Palin and the Legislature information that can give reasons to allow small oil and gas companies to compete fairly in Alaska if new laws are passed ASAP!!

What harm has all this corruption in Alaska politics done to Alaska's small oil and gas competitors over the last 14 year if Sen. John Cowdery was the GATE KEEPER AS REPORTED IN Anchorage Daily News? I quote " He's had powerful positions in the Senate leadership, including Rules Committee chairman, serving as gatekeeper for which bills reach the full Senate for a vote."?

If this is true THEN HOW WILL GOVERNOR PALIN IDENTIFY AND UNDO THE APPARENT HARM HE AND OTHERS DID TO ALASKA'S SMALL OIL AND GAS COMPETITORS UNLESS WE ALL HELP GOV. PALIN AND LEGISLATURE NOW???

In Alaska it has been reported by Dr. Paul Graig of Trading Bay Energy of Anchorage, that drilling permits are costing 76 time higher then the average cost in the lower 48 States and Canada!! With all this corruption in Alaska politics it seems possible that those who have most all Alaska's oil and gas markets may have bribed certain Alaskan Legislators to make laws to keep the smaller competitors out so they can control the markets. Alaska oil and gas laws need to be like Kansas and now is the time to do it, so Alaska will be more productive and competitive. See this link below for details on Dr. Craig's Testomony to the Alaska Legislature, http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_minutes_comm.asp?hse=H&session=24&comm=O!G&date=20051121&time=1310 .

MAYBE Sen. John Cowdery HELPED BLOCK THE SENATE VERSION OF HB 53 AND OTHER BILLS IN ORDER TO KEEP THE SMALL COMPETITORS OUT OF ALASKA. MAYBE GOV. PALIN CAN CONSIDER THE KANSAS MODEL FOR DRILLING PERMITS SO SMALL OIL AND GAS COMPANIES CAN DRILL FOR OIL WITHOUT THE IMPOSABLE RED TAPE AND PERMITTING COST THAT WE HAVE KEEPING SMALL OIL COMPANIES OUT OF ALASKA.

I suggest Gov. Palin and staff talk with Jerry Hodgden the Alaskan and Kansas consulting Geologist to help Alaska consider the Kansas model, he can be reached at geodogs@comcast.net . I believe he would want to help consult with Governor Palin and other Alaskan leaders to adopt the Kansas legislation this next session at a fee The Alaska State Government can afford. Please contact me if I can assist in any way possible.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS? THANKS, DANIEL K. DONKEL at ddonkel@cfl.rr.com
please click on this link for the full story; http://www.adn.com/news/politics/fbi/story/460986.html

Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 9:09 AM
To: 'noel.janda@dsi-ak.com'
Subject: RE: Energy

Thank you for writing to Alaska Governor Sarah Palin. The concerns, opinions, and/or information you have sent are important and valuable to the Governor. Although she is unable to respond to each and every email herself, your message has been received and is being reviewed by the appropriate staff person in this office who can best address your need, suggestion, or comment.

-----Original Message-----

From: WebMail@govweb.alaska.gov [mailto:WebMail@govweb.alaska.gov]

Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2008 7:27 PM

To: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)

Subject: Energy

Web mail from: Mr. Noel Janda

address: 11611 Snowline Circle Anchorage AK 99507

907-345-4284

MESSAGE:

How do we go about setting an appointment with the governor to discuss an energy project? We would need 30 minutes with questions.

noel.janda@dsi-ak.com

Unknown

From: Perry, Kristina Y (GOV) [/O=SOA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=KYPERRY]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 8:09 AM
To: 'gov.palin@yahoo.com'
Subject: Fw: NEWS CLIPS 07-11-08

----- Original Message -----

From: Burkert, Erin (GOV sponsored) <erin.burkert@alaska.gov>

Sent: Fri Jul 11 08:02:16 2008

Subject: NEWS CLIPS 07-11-08

ALASKA OIL PRICE

$144.59

-$1.62

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges

By LISA DEMER

ldemer@adn.com

(07/10/08 16:18:17)

Nearly two years after the FBI raided his office, state Sen. John Cowdery was indicted on conspiracy and bribery charges.

The Anchorage Republican is accused of scheming with Veco Corp. executives to buy the vote of another senator in the battle for an oil tax favored by North Slope oil producers.

According to the 16-page indictment, Cowdery and others conspired in 2006 to give another senator $25,000, characterized as campaign contributions. The indictment was handed up by a grand jury Wednesday and filed in U.S. District Court on Thursday.

Cowdery was not arrested. He's been summoned to appear in U.S. District Court in Anchorage on Aug. 11.

Cowdery will fight the charges, said his attorney, Kevin Fitzgerald of Anchorage.

"Senator Cowdery will be exonerated, and this will be exposed for the mistake it is," Fitzgerald said in a written statement.

"We believe that in the indictment the government has seriously misinterpreted the few comments made by Senator Cowdery and has exacerbated the problem by presenting short snippets of conversation out of context," Fitzgerald said.

Gov. Sarah Palin called for Cowdery to resign.

"It was disturbing to learn that another public official has been charged with violating the public trust. I urge Senator Cowdery to step down, for the good of the state," Palin said.

At 78, Cowdery is the oldest member of the Alaska Legislature. Until January, he was chairman of the powerful Rules Committee. He has been in poor health. He isn't running for re-election this year.

The indictment identifies the senator whom Cowdery was trying to influence only as "State Senator A." Fitzgerald said that person is Donny Olson, D-Nome, who in 2006 was running for lieutenant governor and looking for campaign funds.

The document describes a series of phone calls as well as a June 25, 2006, breakfast meeting. Olson, Cowdery and Veco chief executive Bill Allen met at the old Sunshine Grill in Anchorage, Olson's lawyer, Paul Stockler of Anchorage, said Thursday.

Olson didn't want to talk about the case against Cowdery in detail on Thursday but said he

is cooperating in the investigation.

"If there is corruption out there, those people need to be held responsible," Olson said.

Olson has been cooperating with the FBI and federal prosecutors for about a year, Stockler said. He testified to a federal grand jury in June and has been interviewed maybe a half dozen times about the events covered in the indictment, and confirmed a transcript of the June breakfast, Stockler said.

Olson has no assurance that he won't be prosecuted, but Stockler said it appears highly unlikely that he will be.

"I don't believe Donny Olson did anything wrong," Stockler said. Olson never received the $25,000.

A SERIES OF PHONE CALLS

Cowdery and Olson are among six state legislators whose offices were searched by the FBI on Aug. 31, 2006, the event that broke into the open a bribery scandal that has shaken Alaska's political establishment.

Allen and Veco vice president Rick Smith pleaded guilty to bribing legislators to push through the oil tax supported by North Slope producers, and admitted in court papers that Cowdery was part of the conspiracy.

Two former legislators, Pete Kott of Eagle River and Vic Kohring of Wasilla, are serving federal prison sentences after being convicted on corruption charges related to the push for the tax. A third former legislator, Bruce Weyhrauch of Juneau, is awaiting trial.

The new indictment covers a series of phone calls that began in March 2006 and also the June 2006 breakfast. The FBI had wiretaps on Allen's and Smith's phones. They are not named in the Cowdery charging document, but Fitzgerald confirmed that they are the unnamed executives cited.

During 2006, legislators haggled over a new way to tax oil companies that would bring in more state revenue during times of high oil prices. Veco was pushing a 20 percent tax rate proposed by the Murkowski administration to help promote construction of a natural gas pipeline from the North Slope. Others wanted a higher rate.

According to the new indictment, in a March 30, 2006, telephone call, Cowdery told Smith they needed the support of legislators on the Senate Finance Committee, including Olson. He and his wife were "pretty good friends" with Olson. They could get together socially and talk about where Olson stood, Cowdery told Smith.

Later, on June 20, 2006, Smith twice told Allen in a phone call that the only leverage Veco had to change votes on the tax was by making campaign contributions and hosting fund-raisers.

Then, the charges say, on June 22, 2006, Smith told Cowdery "gotta have some votes here." Smith said company executives would help Olson if he would "step up to the plate," according to the indictment.

Cowdery said he had told Olson, "Maybe we can buy some gasoline," the indictment says. "You know, he's got planes," Cowdery told Smith. A doctor and pilot, Olson owns Olson Air Service Inc.

"Yeah. Yeah," Smith answered.

"That'd be pretty easy and clean," Cowdery said.

Smith said the company didn't "have a problem gettin' some checks to (State Senator A) ... if he can come through on this PPT ... and the gas line," according to the indictment. The tax was called the Petroleum Profits Tax.

Cowdery said he'd tell Olson, the charges say.

"Okay. I mean this is -- you know, I mean this is, ah, come to Jesus time," Smith said.

In another phone call, according to the charges, Cowdery told Allen that he had let Olson know he could probably get Olson some campaign money, but Olson would have to vote for the tax and the gas line. Cowdery said that Olson answered that he had no problem with that, the charges say.

THE BREAKFAST MEETING

On June 25, 2006, Cowdery, Allen and Olson met over breakfast at the Sunshine Grill, which used to be the restaurant next to the Moose's Tooth. They didn't know that a couple of FBI agents were in the next booth with a video camera. Stockler described that scene, based on evidence shown to him and Olson.

Over breakfast, Cowdery told Olson that he needed to go along with Cowdery and two other legislators. One was identified in the charges only as State Senator B. Fitzgerald said that was then-Senate President Ben Stevens. The other wasn't identified at all.

Olson said he needed to get through the primary battle for lieutenant governor, the charges say.

Allen asked him how much money he needed.

"I don't know," Olson answered, according to the indictment. "I've got $100,000 of my own ... but I may fall short, and that's why I haven't had a fund-raiser because I've got all this other stuff I'm trying to organize."

"Well, I think the way (company CEO) could do that is by check. Probably the best way for everybody," Cowdery said, according to the indictment.

"There are a couple of issues I can certainly help you out on. But I gotta be real careful on some of the other ones," Olson said.

"So you need ... some money here pretty quick?" Allen asked Olson. Olson nodded that he did.

Olson then asked Allen, "How much are you good for?"

"What?" Allen answered.

"How much are you good for?"

"Oh, we can probably go 25," Allen answered.

"That's a good start," Olson answered, according to the charges.

Later in the meeting, the indictment says that Cowdery told Olson that "I think we can make this work if you vote the way me and (State Senator B) were to vote when we get down (to Juneau)."

Olson said if they had 11 votes in the Senate and 21 in the House, "I'll be there with you," according to the charging document.

Later that day, Ben Stevens told Allen on the phone that if Olson got money for his campaign, "We might be able to keep him ... as a player," according to the charges. Two days later, Stevens talked to both Cowdery and Olson multiple times, the charges say. Stevens has denied that he did anything wrong.

Olson lost in the August primary to Democrat Ethan Berkowitz.

No Veco fund-raiser ever occurred; the money wasn't pursued after the meeting, Fitzgerald said.

"Our understanding was that while Senator Cowdery was present at this breakfast meeting on June 25, 2006, more than two years ago, he made more comments about the ham being served than he did about the discussion between Allen and Olson," Fitzgerald said in his statement.

LEGISLATORS REACT

Thursday morning in Juneau, legislators were anxiously trying to get information on the criminal charges against one of their colleagues. Cowdery wasn't there, although he attended the legislative session on Wednesday. His office was locked and dark.

Copies of the indictment were made, and lawmakers were seen walking with them in hand.

The Senate leadership appeared shaken initially, but later Senate President Lyda Green talked about the scandal involving a member of her coalition.

Green said Cowdery shouldn't step down. She called him a friend and noted his years in the Legislature, his frail health, his recent absences, the few months he has left to serve. He is part of her leadership team.

"We have a man who has served many years, at the end of his career. I would just hope people would step back and be very thoughtful about that," Green said.

It's been rare for a sitting state legislator to be charged with corruption in Alaska. Kohring was the third and Cowdery is the fourth.

If convicted, Cowdery faces a penalty of up to 10 years in prison on the bribery count and a maximum of five years for conspiracy.

Daily News reporters Wesley Loy and Terry Carr contributed to this story. Find Lisa Demer online at adn.com/contact/ldemer or call 257-4390.

Charges against Cowdery

COUNT 1: Conspiracy to commit bribery and extortion. Prosecutors allege Cowdery conspired with executives of oil services company Veco Corp. to bribe state Sen. Donny Olson of Nome to keep oil taxes from going too high.

COUNT 2: Bribery. Prosecutors allege Cowdery offered to bribe Olson in exchange for his vote on the oil tax legislation.

Exxon plaintiffs pursue interest

SAFEGUARD: Lawyers file brief in an effort to prevent another appeal.

By ERIKA BOLSTAD

ebolstad@adn.com

(07/11/08 05:20:35)

WASHINGTON -- People owed money from the Exxon Valdez lawsuit have asked the U.S. Supreme Court to make it clear that they should receive interest payments, even though the court cut the punitive damages award last month from $2.5 billion to $507 million.

Lawyers for the fishermen and other plaintiffs in the case have calculated that interest will add up to about $488 million, bringing the total amount owed by Exxon Mobil from the 1989 oil spill to nearly $1 billion. Minus attorney fees, an estimated $628 million will be divided among more than 32,000 plaintiffs.

The punitive damages were originally awarded in 1994 as punishment for Exxon's role in the spill, which leaked 11 million gallons of crude oil into the fishing waters of Prince William Sound.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs believe they're entitled to interest, but after so many years of wrangling with Exxon, they're just making sure, said Brian O'Neill, a Minnesota lawyer who represents the plaintiffs. He filed a brief with the Supreme Court earlier this week as a safeguard.

"It's to make sure that we don't make a technical mistake," O'Neill said. "It's just to make sure that we are clearly entitled to the interest ... and that we don't waive it. With this amount of money at stake, you use a belt and suspenders."

That doesn't mean they're not worried about Exxon, as they point out in their filings. "If past is prologue, there is real risk that Exxon would exploit any lack of clarity concerning interest to prolong this litigation still further," lawyers for the plaintiffs wrote.

Exxon has been cagey about whether it will appeal the interest owed in the case. A spokesman for the company wouldn't say whether Exxon plans to fight the interest payments.

Company lawyers are reading what the plaintiffs just filed and waiting for the case to be sent back to the appellate court in San Francisco, and, finally, to the U.S. District Court in Anchorage where it was first heard, said Exxon spokesman Tony Cudmore.

"I think we need to understand what the court will order on that question," Cudmore said. "We need to understand what the plaintiffs have asked for in their submission, we need to review that, and we need to understand the court's views. We will certainly comply with the final order."

But Cudmore also added: "Just to be clear, we are anxious to have the matter resolved. We've got no desire to delay a final outcome."

In this case, Exxon never disputed the district court's determination that the plaintiffs are entitled to interest dating back to the original judgment, O'Neill said in the brief filed this week with the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court recessed at the end of June, but, according to its Web site, during the summer the justices continue to analyze new petitions for review, consider motions and applications, and prepare for cases scheduled for fall argument.

Courts have discretion in whether to award interest but usually do, said Paul Rothstein, a professor at Georgetown University Law Center. Federal court rules call for interest to be paid at a particular Federal Reserve rate available at the time of the award. In this case, it was 5.9 percent.

When deciding whether to award interest, judges take into account a number of factors, Rothstein said, such as how long the litigation went on and the recalcitrance of the people who own the money -- that is, whether they've been dragging the case out deliberately.

"The court can make a decision one way or the other whether interest will accrue, but generally, it does accrue," Rothstein said.

The Supreme Court issued its 5-3 opinion on June 25. The court held that in maritime cases punitive damages should be no more than the compensatory, or actual, damages. That 1-to-1 ratio, a new legal standard for punitive awards, applies only to punitive damages meted

out under maritime law. It was designed to address "the stark unpredictability of punitive awards," the court decided.

Former governors question TransCanada plan

HICKEL, KNOWLES: Both say their proposals make more sense.

By SEAN COCKERHAM

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(07/11/08 04:29:54)

While the state Legislature is in special session to decide whether to give TransCanada Corp. a license for a gas pipeline, two former governors are arguing doing so would be a big mistake.

Former Gov. Tony Knowles wants legislators to postpone the decision and have TransCanada negotiate with the oil companies that have their own pipeline project. Former Gov. Wally Hickel, meanwhile, is calling for the Legislature to reject the proposed license for TransCanada. He wants the state to build its own "all-Alaska" natural gas pipeline from the North Slope to Valdez.

Gov. Sarah Palin wants to give TransCanada the license and a $500 million subsidy to pursue construction of the gas pipeline. Palin has said it is far more likely to be successful and lucrative than a standalone all-Alaska option.

But Hickel argues this is too important to be left in the hands of the Canadians.

"Why turn over control of a resource this valuable to a foreign country?" Hickel said in a written statement Thursday. "If TransCanada gets the license, they and their government will determine when it will be built, who gets the jobs, how much it will be taxed ... and how our gas will be used."

Hickel was co-chair of Palin's 2006 campaign for governor and said it's nothing personal.

"I admire Sarah. She is a caring leader and has done a great job. But on this issue, her advisors have taken her down the wrong road," Hickel said. "It's up to the Legislature to save her, save Alaska and save themselves from the worst decision of the 21st century."

Palin also says the TransCanada plan is better than the competing "Denali" project the oil

companies BP and Conoco Phillips are working on. Palin argues the TransCanada proposal includes guarantees that benefit the state -- such as shipping rates and timelines -- and doesn't leave Alaska at the mercy of the oil companies and what she expects will be their demands for tax breaks.

But BP and Conoco, unlike TransCanada, hold leases to the North Slope gas that is needed for the pipeline and aren't asking for a $500 million subsidy. Knowles said what's needed is for the companies and TransCanada to unite in a single project.

That's what the state should focus on, he said, rather than committing to TransCanada.

"Let's start the negotiation now with all the parties. All the Legislature would have to do is put (the license decision) on hold, 90 days, 120 days, into next session," Knowles said Thursday at a Resource Development Council lunch. "Put it on hold and let's see how serious the parties are ... we'll save $500 million in the process."

Collaboration could cut power bills

ENERGY: Study may outline future for Railbelt companies.

By RINDI WHITE

rwhite@adn.com

(07/11/08 01:05:27)

Consolidating power generation and transmission duties at electrical utilities between Fairbanks and Homer could slice $3.40 to $11.10 a month from Railbelt customers' monthly bills, according to a state-commissioned study.

But so far, utility leaders haven't agreed to give up control of their assets, pool their debts and relinquish at least some of their autonomy to join a regional generation and transmission authority.

Kevin Harper with Washington-based energy consulting firm Black & Veatch presented a draft of the Railbelt Electrical Grid Authority study to an audience of mostly utility leaders Thursday in Anchorage.

The state Legislature commissioned the $800,000 study in 2007.

Compared to the demands on Outside electrical providers, the 900 megawatts used by

Railbelt consumers is small. But the six utilities along its stretch operate independently, and many generate their own power. Combining would mean big changes to the way they operate.

Harper's proposal was compared Thursday to the Alaska Railroad Corp., a state corporation run by a governor-appointed board. He estimated that switching to a state-managed power authority would mean a drop of $10 million to $39 million in the yearly cost of providing power. The range depends on the type of fuel being used to generate power, he said.

Some in the audience said joining forces is the only way utilities can afford to build new power plants and upgrade an aging power transmission system.

"We can't afford our future. There are too many targets and, unfortunately, costs have exploded," said Bradley Evans, interim chief executive officer at Chugach Electric Association.

Many favored the plan but said they need more details before they or their ratepayers would be willing to join.

"I think it's in our best interest (to join), but we've got a long way to go," said Willard Dunham, vice-mayor of the city of Seward, which runs its own electrical utility.

Airlines are asking customers to help curb rise in oil prices

TARGET SPECULATORS: Frequent fliers requested to write Congress.

By HARRY R. WEBER

The Associated Press

(07/11/08 01:05:42)

ATLANTA -- The chief executive officers of a dozen U.S. airlines -- including Alaska Airlines -- beset by record fuel costs that have caused several to cut jobs, reduce capacity and impose higher fees on customers, are now asking for their customers' help to curb the rise of oil prices.

They have co-signed a letter being sent to frequent fliers of their respective carriers, asking customers to contact Congress about the problem of market speculation, which they believe is driving up the price of oil.

"This pain can be alleviated, and that is why we are taking the extraordinary step of writing this joint letter to our customers," the letter states. A copy was received by The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Lawmakers have cited the problems high fuel prices cause airlines, trucking companies, farmers and consumers in calling for restrictions on speculative trading.

Northwest Airlines Corp. Chief Executive Douglas Steenland urged lawmakers in June to close loopholes that allow traders to dodge U.S. speculation limits by trading on foreign exchanges or through over-the-counter transactions.

"Our highest priority is to tackle the overall price of fuel which is now 40 percent of our cost pie," Steenland told lawmakers. "Addressing excessive speculation is the most immediate remedy Congress could deliver."

The letter from the airlines acknowledges that oil prices are partly a response to normal market forces, prompting a need for the country to focus on increased energy supplies and conservation.

"However, there is another side to this story because normal market forces are being dangerously amplified by poorly regulated market speculation," the letter says.

The letter says speculators buy up large amounts of oil and then sell it to each other again and again. The price goes up with each trade and consumers pick up the final tab. Some market experts estimate that current prices reflect as much as $30 to $60 per barrel in unnecessary speculative costs, the letter says.

It adds that regulations established decades ago by Congress to control excessive market speculation have been weakened or removed over the years.

"We need your help," the letter to customers says. "Get more information and contact Congress."

It is signed by the CEOs of Northwest Airlines, AirTran Airways, Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Hawaiian Airlines, JetBlue Airways, Midwest Airlines, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines and US Airways.

Kevin Healy, senior vice president of marketing and planning for AirTran Airways, a subsidiary of AirTran Holdings Inc., said in an interview that while airlines often band together to address congestion and other issues, the letter is unique since it is a public appeal.

Oil industry seeking able workers

FUTURE NEEDS: A gas pipeline would require hundreds of new jobs.

The Associated Press

(07/11/08 00:39:24)

FAIRBANKS -- Oil industry officials in Alaska said they need to fill hundreds of jobs in preparation for more development on the North Slope and the Arctic Ocean and because of the aging work force.

A proposed natural gas pipeline, which could be the largest-ever construction project in North America, would place heavy demands on the oil industry's work force. Plus, existing infrastructure on the North Slope needs maintenance, said Mike Utsler, a senior vice president for BP who oversees the company's operations at Prudhoe Bay.

The oil and gas work force is also aging, with an estimated 40 percent of those in professional occupations eligible for retirement in the next seven years.

Utsler said the North Slope has a slightly younger work force, where those in mechanical and technical trades average between 48 and 51 years, and professional employees average 43 to 44 years.

BP Alaska has hired 600 people in the last 2 1/2 years, many of whom are recent graduates who could help offset anticipated retirements, Utsler said.

Fresh out of four years in the Air Force, Christy Cadle is hoping an oil and gas job will offer the chance to apply her engineering skills and to stay in Alaska.

She attended an industry career fair Wednesday at the Carlson Center sponsored by BP. About two dozen other companies, unions and training programs had booths hoping to attract potential employees.

Ryan Smith, recruiting coordinator for UAF's College of Engineering and Mines, said enrollment is up even over last year's high numbers. "There's a huge market in need of engineers, and there aren't that many engineers out there."

US Senate GOP drops ANWR

STEVENS ANGRY: He says energy solution must include Alaska.

By ERIKA BOLSTAD

ebolstad@adn.com

(07/10/08 00:18:53)

WASHINGTON — Senate Republicans have dropped the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from their energy policy discussions, focusing instead on persuading Democrats to lift a moratorium on offshore drilling.

It's a move that has angered the longtime standard-bearer for drilling in ANWR, U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, who has vowed to put the issue back in front of his colleagues in the Senate.

"It's not off my table," Stevens said. "Unless you include Alaska in an energy solution, it's a non-solution."

The decision to drop the ANWR proposal comes as both the House and the Senate are considering legislation intended to respond to the rising cost of gasoline. The two chambers are considering a number of different proposals, including legislation that would clamp down on speculation in the oil commodities markets, which is suspected of forcing prices upward for consumers.

Other proposals include a push by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., to have President Bush release fuel from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The government has stopped adding oil to the reserve, but advocates of releasing oil from the reserve say that wouldhelp drive down prices.

Recently, some Senate Democrats have suggested that they would be likely to support lifting the moratorium on offshore drilling. It's a shift that could lead to a compromise energy bill that satisfies Republicans who want more production, but also pleases Democrats who want it to focus on conservation and tax breaks for alternative and renewable energy proposals.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, said she was "disappointed" that fellow Republicans won't be pushing ANWR as they press forward with energy legislation to address high gasoline prices. Like Stevens, she'll be looking for ways to add ANWR in an amendment.

"Anything that we do when it comes to energy legislation, if it's going to pass this Senate and Congress, it must be bipartisan," she said. "ANWR is, of course, controversial, and they're looking for things that are noncontroversial. Well, if we could find something noncontroversial, we'd pass it tomorrow."

But Murkowski also said she favors a balanced energy bill that includes production, conservation and research into renewable and alternative fuels. And if the Senate comes up with a compromise bill that includes offshore drilling and some of those other goals, she would consider supporting it.

"I'm not going to say I can't do this because ANWR is not a piece of the solution," Murkowski said. "I've got to look at what is we're trying to advance. But on the same hand, I'm not going to suggest we should continue to hold back on ANWR."

Senate Republican leaders say they remain supportive of drilling in ANWR, but that now is not the time when both parties are looking for a compromise that will help consumers. Democrats have told them that any energy package with ANWR in it pegs them as unwilling to compromise, and that they simply won't consider it, said Don Stewart, a spokesman for the Republican minority leader, Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.

"It's something the Democrats have said they cannot do," Stewart said.

Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain also does not support drilling in ANWR, but has warmed up to offshore drilling.

It's a far different matter in the House, where U.S. Rep. Don Young has separate bill calling for drilling in ANWR. He has the support of top Republicans who consider ANWR "a big component of a broad, comprehensive strategy," said Kevin Smith, a spokesman for the House minority leader, Rep. John Boehner, R-Ohio.

Later this month, Boehner will be leading a group of first-term House Republicans on an energy field trip to a renewable energy lab in Colorado and to ANWR.

"We will use every opportunity at our disposal to force a vote on ANWR and get Democrats on record as anti-American energy production," Smith said.

Young this week criticized Pelosi's proposal to release supplies from the strategic reserves and criticized the Democratic leadership for doing "everything it can to throw obstacles in the way of producing oil and gas from these vast, potentially energy-rich areas."

"It's time for Speaker Pelosi to stop trying to put tissue paper on hemorrhages and start producing a real solution for the American people," he said.

Young's ANWR legislation, which puts some profits from production into renewable resource research, has 167 co-sponsors. Of those, three are Democrats.

New Medicare rules a plus for Alaska doctors

A WIN FOR PATIENTS TOO: A 35 percent increase in rates paid to physicians.

By ERIKA BOLSTAD

ebolstad@adn.com

(07/11/08 01:05:22)

WASHINGTON -- Alaska doctors will be paid more than the national average under new Medicare rules passed by Congress this week, making it less likely they will stop seeing patients who rely on the government-backed health insurance for people older than 65.

The measure was supported by the entire Alaska congressional delegation, which had worked to get a 35 percent increase in the rates paid to doctors who accept Medicare patients.

"Medicare has only been paying about 40 percent of the costs for Alaska seniors," said Sen. Ted Stevens in a statement. "For years, they have struggled to get access to health care because these Medicare payments were insufficient. Those days should be over now."

In Alaska, the extra 35 percent helps compensate doctors who work in an expensive health care environment, said Dr. Thomas Vasileff, an orthopedic surgeon who is president of the Alaska State Medical Association.

Nationwide, the legislation keeps doctors from facing a 10 percent cut in their reimbursement rates. If Congress hadn't passed the new legislation, many medical groups had suggested that doctors would stop seeing Medicare patients altogether, because they would have lost money on the office visits.

President Bush is expected to veto the Medicare bill, but it is expected to become law anyway because it passed in both the House and Senate by veto-proof margins.

Helicopter helps douse Bicentennial Park fire

(07/11/08 04:47:03)

ANCHORAGE -- Anchorage firefighters called out a state Division of Forestry helicopter Thursday afternoon to help douse a small but hard to reach brush fire in a heavily forested part of Far North Bicentennial Park.

According to the Anchorage Fire Department, the pilot of a private aircraft reported an unattended campfire about 12:15 p.m., burning about a half-mile from the intersection of Tudor and Elmore roads. The blaze was about a quarter-mile from the nearest parking area, and creeping toward the South Fork of Campbell Creek. It took firefighters about 10 minutes to hike in with hand tools and begin to dig a fire line.

They arrived to find the fire covering about a tenth of an acre and eating through a low-lying mix of spruce needles, birch leaves and ground vegetation, fire department spokeswoman Jen Klugh said. No homes were threatened.

The state helicopter made three water bucket drops of about 240 gallons each, and the fire was contained at about 1:50 p.m.

Klugh said in a written statement the fire was located in what looked like a homeless camp or recreation area.

Barn-door halibut grabs Homer derby lead

Californian catches 348.2-pounder that could be worth thousands

By KEVIN KLOTT

kklott@adn.com

(07/11/08 04:53:24)

Historically, Alaskans have been the luckiest anglers in the Homer Jackpot Halibut Derby, catching five of its last 10 winners.

Surprising? Probably not, considering Alaskans often know where to locate the mother lode of halibut and have more salt-water angling experience than most run-of-the-mill tourists.

But Californian Jeff Pardi isn't your average tourist. He brought his own gear to Alaska for his second lingcod trip in as many years in the Gulf of Alaska with Keith Kalke of Ocean Hunter Charters.

All Pardi needed was Kalke to transport him to a sandy pinnacle about 50 miles off the Homer shoreline that's known for abundant lingcod and an occasional trophy-size halibut.

"Captains know the backside of pinnacles have at least one hog," Kalke said. "So I tell clients, when you're fishing for lings, buy a derby ticket."

Targeting lingcod with jigs, Pardi hooked a monster halibut -- a 348.2-pounder that took more than an hour to land and could end up being worth thousands of dollars.

"It was an hour and 15 minutes of hell," Pardi said. "I was pretty beat afterwards."

But all the pain in his forearms and sweat that rolled off his forehead was worth the effort. He could become one filthy-rich angler.

'STILL ANYBODY'S GAME'

With 81 days remaining in the five-month derby, his first-place fish could win Alaska's longest running derby. The average weight for winning halibut is 323.5 pounds and the average payout is $27,756.

The amount in this year's jackpot won't be known for months. Derby tickets cost $2.50. Derby director Paula Frisinger said ticket sales are on par with last year when Jerry Saunders of Chugiak earned $37,243 for his winning fish.

Though the derby started May 1, Frisinger said it's just starting to heat up. Last week, Steve Merson of Wisconsin caught a $10,000 tagged halibut but went away penniless because he failed to purchase a derby ticket.

Then John Calvert Jr. took the lead with a 279.6-pounder a few days later, getting anglers and captains in Homer fired up, Frisinger said.

"It's only the beginning of July and our smallest fish on the board is 204 pounds," she said. "It's still anybody's game."

But for now, the top spot belongs to an Outside angler. If Pardi's 348.2-pounder holds the lead, he would become the fourth Californian to win the derby -- the most successful state other than Alaska, which has racked up 11 of the 22 derby winners.

Odds are also in Pardi's favor. His fish would rank fifth on the all-time list. Jerry Meinders of Minnesota holds the record for the biggest derby winner, a 376-pounder caught in 1996.

'GLUED TO THE GUNWALE'

On a rare bluebird day in the Gulf of Alaska where Kalke and his clients fished, the air was so warm and still that Pardi wore shorts and a T-shirt. The water was calm and glassy.

Only 45 minutes after Pardi dropped his jig 150 feet to the sea bottom, something massive struck the end of his line.

The halibut stripped yard after yard of Pardi's 100-pound-test line. But the 34-year-old braced himself against the railing and steadily cranked.

"He was glued to the gunwale," said Kalke, a five-year captain who would soon witness the biggest halibut a client of his has ever caught.

When the halibut surfaced, Kalke shot it with a slug, but it still took three gaffs and three anglers to haul the lunker onboard.

Laying flat on the deck, everyone thought the fish was dead. Then it started thrashing and all six clients found a safe corner to hide -- well all except Pardi.

"Jump on it! Jump on it!" Kalke yelled to Pardi.

He obeyed the captain's orders and gave the halibut a few good whacks.

Once they reached the Homer harbor, they put the big fish on the ground and Pardi couldn't help but jump on the eight-foot halibut again. But this time, he gave it a giant hug.

"I guess you'd say I was laying with the fishes," he said. "Just like the Godfather."

Interest develops in wood pellets for heat

The Associated Press

(07/10/08 01:17:36)

FAIRBANKS -- A state forestry official says he's fielded several inquiries from companies interested in producing wood pellets to be used for heat.

Doug Hanson, a Division of Forestry resource manager, said a forest inventory being conducted could help turn that idea into reality.

The Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation helped secure funding for the inventory.

Project manager Cassie Pinkel said the effort will help provide a sustainable supply of materials for businesses interested in energy projects including pellet plants.

Pellet plants often are set up near mills with lots of waste wood.

Pinkel also sees potential in black spruce, which could be culled from commercial harvest areas and clear-cuts.

FAIRBANKS DAILY NEWS MINER

Alaska political leaders say Cowdery should step down

Steve Quinn/The Associated Press

Published Thursday, July 10, 2008

JUNEAU -- Calls for state Sen. John Cowdery to resign rang out shortly after he was indicted Thursday on federal bribery and conspiracy charges <http://media.newsminer.com/docs/cowdery_indict.pdf> .

Two of the loudest calls were made by members of Cowdery's own party, Republican Minority Leader Gene Therriault and Gov. Sarah Palin.

Therriault, who leads a five-person minority caucus that does not include Cowdery, reiterated his long call for Cowdery's resignation.

"This development adds to the complexity the Legislature faces to regain the public's

trust and confidence as we forge ahead in making one of the most important public policy decisions in the state's history," Therriault said in a prepared statement.

Lawmakers have just started their second consecutive special session on whether to approve TransCanada Corp.'s application for a license for the build a multibillion dollar natural gas pipeline line.

Palin urged him to step down "for the good of the state."

The charges Cowdery faces stem from alleged misdoing in 2006 - a time when such allegations would not have warranted attention from state authorities.

It took sweeping ethics reform last year to close that legal loophole which previously made it perfectly legal for a lobbyist to offer a campaign contribution in exchange for a vote on a lobbyist's bill.

"It's important that this loophole was closed," said Rep. Les Gara, who, along with fellow Anchorage Democrat Rep. Harry Crawford, proposed the change.

"This state can't rely on the federal government to come in and keep the state's house in order. We have to do this on our own as a sovereign state," Gara said.

Cowdery was in Juneau for gas pipeline hearings on Wednesday afternoon, but checked out of his Juneau hotel room early Thursday morning and flew back to Anchorage. His first court hearing is scheduled Aug. 11.

Sen. President Lyda Green, R-Wasilla, said people should not be quick to call for a resignation as Cowdery remains presumed innocent.

"The Legislature should not prematurely step in and take any action that would alter flavor or prejudice on anything that is ongoing," said Green, whose majority coalition includes nine Democrats and six Republicans - including Cowdery.

Cowdery, who is not seeking re-election, has fought various illnesses the last two years, missing large chunks of this year's regular legislative session.

During his absence, Cowdery did step down from the powerful position of Rules Chairman. Sen. Gary Stevens, R-Kodiak, took over and yielded his majority leader post to Sen. Johnny Ellis, D-Anchorage.

Cowdery returned to Juneau in time to vote on the most important bills such as education funding and the budget.

Green said she saw no reason for him to abstain from voting on the gas pipeline proposal or the energy relief bills being heard this month should he be in town to vote.

"I see no connection (in the charges) to anything that is before us," Green said. "It doesn't help your health when you go through these things, this kind of scrutiny."

The federal indictment did cause a stir in what are otherwise staid pipeline hearings.

Lawmakers were seen passing around BlackBerry phones with news alerts announcing the indictment and later copies of the 16-page document.

Denali president put in hot seat over natural gas pipeline commitment

By Stefan Milkowski <http://www.newsminer.com/staff/stefan-milkowski/>

Published Friday, July 11, 2008

JUNEAU — Denali's commitment to its natural gas pipeline project and its willingness to accommodate the state's wishes were the two main issues Thursday when company president Bud Fackrell addressed state lawmakers.

The Legislature is considering whether or not to issue an exclusive state license to Canadian pipeline builder TransCanada under the Alaska Gasline Inducement Act. But North Slope producers ConocoPhillips and BP are pursuing their own project outside AGIA through a joint-venture called Denali — The Alaska Gas Pipeline.

Lawmakers tried to gauge Denali's commitment to the project.

"I don't have any comfort at all in the ads I see," said Rep. Carl Gatto, a Republican from Palmer. "They look good, but they have no substance to them. I want to see the action plan."

Fackrell responded by saying he did have a plan. Denali plans to spend $40 million on field work this year and $600 million during the next few years to develop a detailed cost estimate and solicit shipping commitments from gas producers, he said.

"I'm not asking you to trust us, I'm asking you to watch me," he added. "We're not going to spend $600 million in three years for an advertising campaign."

Lawmakers also questioned Fackrell about Denali's willingness to commit to the various "must-have" requirements spelled out in AGIA. BP and ConocoPhillips did not apply under AGIA and described the requirements as too restrictive.

Fackrell said Denali would meet some of the requirements, including holding an open season, when the company will seek interest from shippers; offering lower shipping rates in Alaska than in Canada; and soliciting interest from gas producers in pipeline expansions every two years.

He did not commit to voluntarily expanding the pipeline when there is sufficient interest or to using a financing mechanism required in AGIA aimed at keeping shipping tolls low. Even where Fackrell did commit, lawmakers questioned the nature of the promise.

Sen. Kim Elton, a Democrat from Juneau, noted that Fackrell's verbal commitments weren't backed up by any kind of contract, as TransCanada's would be, and suggested the company put its commitments into its ads.

Sen. Bill Wielechowski, an Anchorage Democrat, asked if Fackrell was willing to put its promises in writing, with penalties for breaking them.

Fackrell responded by pointing to the work already underway and planned for the next few years, adding, "I have a project plan."

At times, Fackrell deferred questions to Denali's parent companies. When asked about changes in the state's taxes and royalties sought in connection with the project, Fackrell

said Denali would not seek concessions as a pipeline builder, but added that BP and ConocoPhillips would seek them as gas producers.

Fackrell did not explicitly urge lawmakers to deny TransCanada a state license under AGIA, but expressed concerns that doing so could stall Denali's project and limit the state's ability to provide the necessary fiscal terms.

He warned that backing TransCanada could jeopardize the pipeline project, but promised that Denali would push forward even if lawmakers approved the license.

"We're committed to move forward," he said. "Whatever decision you make here, Denali will continue to go."

Lawmakers offered different reactions to the testimony.

Sen. Bert Stedman, a Republican from Sitka, said the presentation demonstrated Denali was a viable project and not a "flim-flam company put in place with alternative motives."

Wielechowski, on the other hand, argued the Denali push amounted to "Conoco and BP's attempt to negotiate fiscal terms."

He added that the commitments Fackrell refused to make were "some of the really critical ones," such as voluntarily expanding the pipeline and using the financing structure called for in AGIA.

Local lawmakers said the testimony didn't diminish their support for TransCanada's project.

Rep. Mike Kelly, a Republican from Fairbanks, pointed to TransCanada's record of low tariffs and said he was convinced the producers were seeking control rather than the lowest cost pipeline.

Sen. Gene Therriault, a North Pole Republican, said he was still concerned about producer control of the pipeline and the lack of firm commitments.

"They didn't have to ask permission to start Denali and they won't have to ask our permission to stop it," he said.

Alaska Alcoholic Beverage Control Board postpones Fairbanks liquor store decision

By Rebecca George <http://www.newsminer.com/staff/rebecca-george/>

Published Friday, July 11, 2008

FAIRBANKS — The Alcoholic Beverage Control Board will postpone its decision to approve or deny a liquor license for Patrick Kohls' proposed Mighty Dollar liquor and grocery store planned for South Cushman Street.

Kohls' liquor store and grocery was already denied a liquor license by the city of Fairbanks this past March when four council members — John Eberhart, Tonya Brown, Chad Roberts and Bernard Gatewood — declined a motion to waive the city's protest of a liquor license for Kohls.

Fairbanks Mayor Terry Strle defended the council's decision to the ABC Board on Thursday morning.

"The community spoke clearly that they don't want another liquor store in that part of town," Strle said.

Police Chief Dan Hoffman and more than a dozen residents of South Fairbanks expressed their concerns at the March 24 City Council meeting saying they opposed the new store due to the existing heavy traffic of alcohol-related activity up and down South Cushman Street and the possible impact on the housing market in the neighborhood.

Both Kohls and Larry Hackenmiller spoke in favor of another liquor store and grocery in South Fairbanks at the ABC Board meeting and said another liquor store wouldn't change the current chronic inebriate situation in town.

Kohls said he got support from the local community for the addition of a grocery store in the area, but alcohol sales would be needed to support the business.

"It's important that we understand this decision to the fullest, as vested community members' opinions should govern this, and we want to make a valid decision," said Shirley Gifford, ABC Board member.

JUNEAU EMPIRE

ndustry's copper claims questioned

Cruise line group's metal counts too high, water engineers say

An element of the Alaska Cruise Association's argument for relaxed wastewater discharge regulations is based on numbers an industry watchdog calls misleading.

If cruise lines want to dump wastewater into Alaska waters, they must comply with a slew of new limits on effluents by 2010. The industry group has said it can't meet the limits for copper, nickel, zinc and cadmium, and has appealed.

Copper has been a particularly sore point, because copper levels in port communities' drinking water are high - and that's drinking water the cruise ships buy and then have to filter before they discharge it.

Under the permit, "cruise ships would be violating the permit were they to simply to take aboard and then discharge water that is deemed safe for consumption by residents of Juneau, Ketchikan, Skagway, Haines and Sitka," according to a presentation made by Alaska Cruise Association president John Binkley in February.

In a chart, Binkley presents copper levels in Southeast ports' drinking water, ranging between 237 and 879 parts per billion, and compares them to the wastewater standard cruise ships will have to meet by 2010: 3.1 parts per billion.

Since cruise ships buy that drinking water from ports, that would mean they'd have to reduce the copper in the water by at least 99 percent.

"You can't take a glass of tap water from a home onto a cruise ship and pour it overboard," Binkley said in an interview. "To me, that's unreasonable. Your drinking water does not meet that standard for copper."

But while data is spotty, there may be a lot less copper in water going to cruise ships than Binkley's chart suggests, said water engineers at several ports.

"Data collected from the customer tap program is of no value with respect to cruise shipdischarge permitting," said Tim Gladden, Skagway water superintendent. "Reviewing an informational document published by the Alaska Cruise Association, the residential values appear to have been used. The use of the wrong information in the chart is great for drama, however, of no relevance."

That's because the DEC readings Binkley cited measure the corrosion of local pipes, not the natural concentration of copper in the water cruise ships buy. DEC takes readings at houses with particularly old, corroded copper pipes after the water has sat in the pipes all night leaching copper. Readings have ranged since 1999 from 72 to 940 parts per billion at the most contaminated taps.

But water engineers can also flush out the system and take a reading on water coming through those taps that hasn't had a chance to sit and leach copper. Those readings are likely to be closer to the natural level of copper in the water-and closer to the copper cruise ships are taking aboard, because the water ships buy comes through concrete, not copper pipes.

The last flush reading for Ketchikan came in at 41 parts per billion, according to Dave Johnston, Ketchikan Public Utilities water division foreman.

Gershon Cohen, an industry watchdog in Haines, said filtering from 41 to 3 doesn't seem like such a hardship.

"That's very different from having to go from 878 to 3," said Cohen.

Cohen co-wrote the ballot initiative voters passed in 2006 that required DEC to issue the cruise ship's new permit, and he opposes the industry's appeal.

In an e-mail to DEC officials, he wrote he was convinced "that ACA is grossly misrepresenting the situation to convince people they are being sold water that is extremely high in (copper)."

The situation is echoed in Skagway, whose drinking water Binkley's chart lists at 700 parts per billion. Gladden said the naturally occurring concentration of copper isn't measured often; at the last sampling, in 2001, it was 119 parts per billion.

Binkley said he knew the DEC water tests don't accurately portray the copper levels in the water that ends up on the cruise ships. He said cruise lines were now in the process of collecting data and so far only had "preliminary" results.

Incidentally, none of the high copper values for port drinking water violate their own drinking water standard, which is much higher: 1,300 parts per billion.

Wastewater copper limits are more stringent than drinking water ones for a good reason, said DEC water quality division chief Jim Powell. Fish are a lot more sensitive to copper than people are. As an example of why, Lowell said, new University of Washington studies have found that salmon homing devices are disoriented by trace amounts of copper in the water.

DEC cruise ship program manager Denise Koch said she's interested in how much copper goes aboard cruise ships because it may affect what sort of technology the ships have to use to get it down to 3.1 parts per billion.

But in one sense, it doesn't matter to DEC whether the copper going aboard is 940 parts per billion or 41.

"The impact on the permit limit is this: The permit limit stays the same," she said.

State legislator Rep. Max Gruenberg, D-Anchorage, was one of those targeted for persuasion on a cruise ship junket in mid-June.

He saw the chart in Binkley's presentation, and gleaned that the cruise ship was being held to much more stringent standards than the port communities themselves.

"If it's the case that it was too stringent to be reasonable, then I'd be willing to take a look at it (in the Legislature)," he said.

But he did not know that even though the drinking water copper levels were much higher, they were within the limits for drinking water.

Upon learning that, he said, "That's comparing apples to oranges ... I had no idea one was drinking water and the other was wastewater."

"That takes the conversation to a different level," he said.

Airport has new weapon to fight noxious weeds

Aquatic weed harvester slices plants, off loads them on the pond's shore

In the fight against weeds growing in the airport's pond used by floatplanes, the weeds came out on top in previous years.

Airport manager Dave Palmer said staff tried herbicide, an underwater cable towed by a boat and a homemade rake deployed by a backhoe without much success.

The unwelcome weeds can get tangled up in the steering controls of the float planes and they also attract unwanted water fowl near the planes, Palmer said. But they may have met their match in the airport's latest weapon in the war: a 20-year-old aquatic weed harvester.

The harvester floats on a small barge and is powered by two paddle wheels. Its front looks somewhat like a bulldozer, with blades that slice up the weeds and a conveyer belt that sends them to the rear of the machine, to be offloaded on the pond's shore.

One person sits on top of the machine to steer and control the machine's cutting blades.

"It's not real complicated," said airport staffer Norman Hales as he was tying up the machine Thursday after unloading what looked like several pounds of weeds.

Palmer said the machine is working far better than previous years' efforts to eradicate weeds in the pond.

"It's satisfying. It's like mowing the lawn," he said. "You can see it coming up."

The machine has been in use for about a month, Palmer said. He said the used machine cost $17,500, compared to $120,000 for a new one.

Next year, construction plans call for dredging the pond, Palmer said. The two-year process will make the pond deeper, and Palmer said he hopes it will mean less weeds.

But if there's still a need for the harvester, Palmer said he'll keep it around. If not, he said he plans to sell it.

KETCHIKAN DAILY NEWS

Borough, city discuss issues

By LEILA KHEIRY

Daily News Staff Writer

While taking no action Wednesday evening, the Ketchikan City Council and Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly discussed a variety of topics and came to agreement on ways to move forward with some, including forming an advisory committee to help facilitate the planned new Ketchikan Public Library building.

Public comment Wednesday focused on the library. Susan Fisher of the Friends of the Library citizen organization told the elected officials that a new library was long overdue in Ketchikan, and was a critical need for residents throughout the borough.

She said obtaining state and private funding will require both government agencies to identify the library as a community priority.

"We absolutely have to be together on this issue," she said.

Fisher asked those in the audience at the Ted Ferry Civic Center who supported a new library to raise signs that read, "New library now," and at least a dozen people waved the small pink placards in the air. About three dozen people were in the audience Wednesday.

Library employee Kelly Johnson also spoke, and specifically addressed the lack of program space, particularly for Ketchikan's youth. Johnson, who works with the library's Teen Advisory Group, said a new library would allow Ketchikan to show teens they are valued members of the community.

Susan Peters of the Downtown Steering Committee citizen organization reiterated the need for a new library located in the downtown area. She also supported future improvements at Ketchikan General Hospital, and said areawide support of that facility should continue.

Peters added that the city and borough need to work together to plan for Ketchikan's economic future. Some improvements have been made, she said, but "much work needs to be done yet."

Another Downtown Steering Committee member, Todd Phillips, agreed with Peters and added that the community needed to focus on ways to attract more year-round business in the

downtown area. He also pointed out that, while Ketchikan now has more cruise ship berth space than ever, the actual time ships spend in port is relatively short, which affects how much visitors spend here.

The library was one of the issues on the agenda Wednesday, with the city asking whether and how the borough could contribute to funding the new building, estimated to cost between $10 million and $13 million.

City Mayor Bob Weinstein said, "We're in a perfect position to move this project forward" if the two governments worked together.

He suggested an advisory steering committee that would work directly with staff and the architects, with representatives from the Council, the Friends of the Library, citizens at large and Assembly members.

The committee would "help guide the process so we can end up with a building ... that reflects the wishes of the entire community," even though the library, technically, is a city project, Weinstein said.

He added that the state established a library building program to fund 50 percent of municipal library project costs. Although no money has been allocated to that program yet, he said, the sooner Ketchikan gets its request in, the better.

Assembly Member John Harrington asked what method the borough could use to help with funding.

Borough Attorney Scott Brandt-Erichsen said there were several options. The borough could provide an annual appropriation to the city, increase the nonareawide tax, or ask nonareawide borough voters - those who live outside city limits - to approve a bond. The latter two would not include Saxman, he said, but that community could participate through an intergovernmental agreement.

Assembly Member Jim Shoemaker expressed concern about the cost of the proposed library, planned to be built on the former Main School site on Grant Street. He suggested the city consider renovating portions of White Cliff that will be available after the borough offices are complete. He said that would save money and could move the project forward more quickly.

Assembly Member Dave Kiffer asked why White Cliff was rejected as a possible site earlier.

Tim Whiteley of Welsh Whiteley Architects, the local firm working on the library project, said the floor structure of White Cliff would have to be reinforced to support the library's book collection, and the space available - about 16,000 square feet - would fall short of the current plan, which calls for a library between 23,000 and 27,000 square feet.

Council Member Sam Bergeron said he was "intrigued" by Shoemaker's suggestion, and he hoped the Council would reconsider White Cliff as a more economical library site.

Assembly Member Glen Thompson disagreed. He said the borough planned to move into White Cliff in January, and that would be delayed if White Cliff became a new option for the library. That delay would cost money, he said, and considering a new library site would set the library project back, as well.

The two bodies also discussed funding for the upcoming KGH master plan, due in fall. The anticipated improvements in the plan, if implemented in full, are expected to cost about $50 million over 20 years, said City Manager Karl Amylon, and in light of Gov. Sarah Palin's recent veto of state money for the proposed surgical suite renovation, it's unclear whether state funding will be available.

Amylon said the hospital serves everyone in the borough, so it was reasonable to ask residents areawide to contribute to its improvement projects. The city has proposed that the borough establish a 1 percent nonareawide sales tax dedicated to hospital maintenance and improvements.

Thompson said one reason the proposed consolidation of the city and borough failed was that residents outside city limits didn't want their taxes to go up. However, he said, the hospital is an areawide concern and he wouldn't oppose placing such a question on the ballot.

Bergeron said residents already have a high tax burden, and he didn't think there would be much support for another tax.

Kiffer said that, obviously, the city needs money for the project, and asked what Bergeron suggested as an alternate solution.

Bergeron said he didn't have an idea at that point, but limited funding means the city and borough should prioritize community projects.

Also Wednesday, Amylon updated the elected officials on the city's planned Water Street sidewalk widening project, which has been delayed at least a year due to state Department of Transportation concerns over federal historic preservation regulations.

Amylon said DOT officials told him the city needed to conduct a $60,000 study of Newtown before the project could move forward. He said he had scheduled a teleconference between his office, DOT and federal highway officials to clear up the issue.

Kiffer, who is the executive director of Historic Ketchikan, said the city shouldn't blame the historic preservation regulations. DOT likely was misinterpreting the regulations to delay the project, he said, because the state agency was "clearly uninterested" in projects related to Tongass Highway. He offered his help to the city.

Water Street is part of Tongass Highway, which is a state road.

The two bodies briefly discussed ways to use the borough's portion of the state's cruise ship passenger tax, which can be used only for projects that directly relate to cruise ship visitors.

Borough Planning Director Tom Williams said the funds could be used to pay for part of a downtown parking garage, because parking arguably has been affected by the cruise industry.

Williams also detailed ongoing planning within city limits. Parking was a main point in his presentation, and Williams said adequate parking was needed for economic growth and public safety. He said he moved to Ketchikan in November, and quickly noted that parking in downtown was an issue.

"I feel like I've partly funded the new library through my parking tickets," he said.

Parking in Newtown also is needed, he said, and the borough has identified potential public parking space north of the tunnel next to the Keene and Currall office building, and behind First City Saloon. Even with that, he said, development of Berth IV could increase the need for parking in Newtown, so more planning is needed.

The two bodies also briefly discussed a city request that the state transfer to the city ownership of uplands connected to Knudson Cove and Hole-in-the-Wall harbors, both outside of city limits. The state asked the borough to weigh in on the request, and Borough Manager Dan Bockhorst recommended that the Assembly approve it, as long as access easements were provided to private property owners next to the uplands.

Thompson expressed concern that the transfer would create an "enclave" of city property far outside city limits. He said the tidelands belong to the borough, and, logically, the uplands should, as well.

Borough Mayor Joe Williams said that might create a new issue.

"I don't think we want to do that, because (the city) may want us to manage the harbors," he said.

All the public harbors in Ketchikan formerly were managed by the state, but in the last few years, DOT transferred ownership to the city. The city initially resisted taking Knudson Cove and Hole-in-the-Wall, but eventually agreed to take the two harbors rather than allow them to shut down.

Thompson asked whether the city would ask the borough take over the harbors if the

Assembly didn't agree to the land transfer.

Amylon said if the borough owned both the tidelands and the uplands, it would be logical for the borough to also run the two harbors.

Council Member Dick Coose said he thought the borough should own the uplands, and Harrington agreed. Kiffer, however, said the officials were "stepping off a mini cliff" and making an issue out of what should be a simple matter.

"Why must we always open a can of worms that doesn't need to be opened?" Kiffer said.

Weinstein said he looked forward to hearing the Assembly's decision on the uplands question.

During Council and Assembly comments, officials from both bodies agreed that another joint meeting should be scheduled. Coose suggested six months, Bergeron suggested sooner, and Mayor Williams suggested Oct. 9.

The officials were asked to provide available dates so another joint meeting could be scheduled.

School Board OKs contract

By LYLE GOULDING

Daily News Staff Writer

A new contract for the Independent Maintenance Association and a report about water problems at Fawn Mountain Elementary School were two of the issues before the Ketchikan School Board at its regular meeting on Wednesday.

The board approved a contract for the maintenance association, 5-2, which will give the 13 members of the group a 4 percent salary increase during each of the next three years. Board members Carl Webb and Michael Fitzgerald voted no.

Webb expressed disappointment in the lack of random drug testing included in the contract.

"We have electricians, plumbers, we have people who drive vehicles and use heavy equipment. As far as I know every (Ketchikan Gateway) Borough entity that has anyone dealing with any maintenance equipment all have a random drug testing program," Webb said. "I see it as for the safety of the district, to protect us. I see it as a safety measure

for the children in our schools. I am not in support of this (contract)."

Webb also pointed out that a warning notice form in the contract included a warning for, among other things, "being under the influence of alcohol."

Webb said that being under the influence should result in immediate termination.

"I've been talking about alcohol and substance abuse in this community as much as I can and I just think it's terrible that we are going to go into an agreement with an entity of this government that doesn't have a safety random testing program," Webb said.

The warning form would be handed out by an employee's supervisor when one of the violations occurred.

During discussion of the motion, Fitzgerald agreed with Webb on the issue of drug testing. He added that the 12 percent increase, over three years, might be higher than the market in Ketchikan should allow.

Board member Matt Olsen defended the raise, saying that percentage increases in some City of Ketchikan employees' salaries were much higher during their last rate adjustment.

The contract with the maintenance association takes effect retroactively on July 1 and expires on June 30, 2011.

Superintendent Robert Boyle spoke to the board about water-pressure issues causing problems at Fawn Mountain Elementary School.

There isn't enough water pressure in the building to meet minimum fire code standards for a building with a sprinkler system.

On Tuesday, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assistant Manager Cynna Gubatayao sent a letter to Boyle outlining the problem.

According to the letter, minimum standards are 1,500 gallons per minutes. Monday's flow at the school was 813 gallons per minute.

The last time the building's pressure was checked, on Jan. 16, 2007, the flow was 2,127 gallons per minute.

Boyle said on Wednesday that the exact problem with the lessened flow had not been discovered, but the borough continued to work to find the solution.

The only scheduled activity in the school during the summer months is a summer library on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Boyle said that program will continue, with increased rules in place.

"They are allowed to continue that program as a long as we implement some precautions," Boyle said. "Any suspicion of fire is not to be investigated, they are to call 911 or pull the alarm immediately."

According to Gubatayao's letter, there was a fire watch at Fawn Mountain on Monday and Tuesday. Someone was at the building throughout the nights.

Boyle said he didn't know whether the fire watch was continuing. South Tongass Volunteer Fire Department chief Scott Davis referred all questions to borough management when called for details Wednesday night.

Borough Manager Dan Bockhorst said in a telephone interview Wednesday night that he didn't know whether the fire continued on Wednesday. He said fire officials were "appropriately concerned" with the issues surrounding the pressure problems.

He said the borough would continue to quickly resolve the water pressure issues.

"I am confident that we are being responsible on this," Bockhorst said. "We're in the stage of trying to confirm that there is a problem and how to deal with it as quickly as we can."

Boyle said the issue must be resolved before school begins in August.

In other business the board unanimously approved:

• An updated Internet acceptable use policy. The policy pertains to student and staff use of the Internet on district computers and Internet connections.

• Establishment of an insurance committee among district employees in the first reading about the policy change. The committee will help allocate funds when the insurance reserve account is more than $400,000. The policy regarding the committee will be back before the board another time for final approval.

• A memorandum of understanding with OceansAlaska Marine Science Center. The memorandum states that the district will endorse the center as a local partner in educating Ketchikan's youth.

The next regular meeting of the Ketchikan School Board is set for July 23.

KTUU

Producer's pipeline plan under scrutiny in Juneau

by Rebecca Palsha

Thursday, July 10, 2008

JUNEAU, Alaska -- Hearings on a natural gas pipeline continued in Juneau Thursday.

Bud Fackrell, president of the Denali pipeline project, a joint venture between BP and Conoco Phillips, found himself on the hot seat for most of the morning.

Lawmakers seemed skeptical about how serious the two oil giants are about the project.

Fackrell insisted the companies are spending millions of dollars to make it a reality.

Lawmakers also had questions about the company's initial approach.

"Why did you not apply for a license under AGIA?," said Rep. Bob Lynn, R-Anchorage. "Which one of those must-haves may have prevented you from applying under AGIA? Why did Denali decide not to follow the state process approved by the Legislature?"

"What they told me was under the terms of AGIA they did not believe it was a viable way to move the project forward," Fackrell said.

He says the company still does not have offices in Anchorage, although he says he hopes to nail that down any day now.

Study connects campaign funds to victory

by Jason Moore

Thursday, July 10, 2008

ANCHORAGE, Alaska -- An Alaska watchdog group says the latest corruption indictment provides yet another reason to support its Clean Elections legislation.

The Alaska Public Interest Research Group sponsors ballot measure 3, which will appear on the August primary ballot.

AKPIRG recently conducted a "Campaign Finance and Incumbency Study" and the results were made public Thursday.

The study found that those lawmakers who raise the most money win in most instances.

It also shows that once a candidate is elected to the Alaska Legislature it's tough to get them out of office even if the opponent is more qualified.

The study covered data from 2000 through 2006.

Former governor stands strong against AGIA

by Jason Moore

Thursday, July 10, 2008

ANCHORAGE, Alaska -- In 2006, former Gov. Wally Hickel co-chaired Sarah Palin's campaign.

On Thursday, he urged lawmakers to vote against Palin's pick for a gas line developer.

Hickel says going with TransCanada and a pipeline through Canada would be a mistake.

Hickel says he wants to see the state build and own an all-Alaska pipeline from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, where it would export liquefied natural gas to the West Coast and Asia.

The Palin administration says the pipeline through Canada is the best deal for Alaska. But Hickel hopes lawmakers vote otherwise.

"You people got to believe that it's good. I go on the street and people say, 'Well, that pipeline is going to cost so much money.' I don't care if it costs a dollar or a thousand-billion we're going to make all kinds of money on that pipeline," Hickel said. "It's like they said, don't build a Captain Cook Hotel, two rooms is enough, three rooms is enough. You got to think big and it pays for itself."

Officials with the Palin administration say they're disappointed Hickel isn't supporting TransCanada.

News Minute: Here is the latest Alaska news from The Associated Press

Associated Press - July 11, 2008 10:44 AM ET

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) - State Senator John Cowdery's lawyer says his client is innocent of bribery and conspiracy charges. Cowdery, an Anchorage Republican, has been indicted by a grand jury in the ongoing federal investigation of corruption in Alaska politics. Government attorneys say Cowdery conspired with former VECO Corp. executives to bribe an unnamed state senator for his vote for a new oil tax proposed in 2006.

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) - A cruise ship that went aground in Glacier Bay last week took on water while heading to Ketchikan for repairs. The Spirit of Glacier Bay was diverted to Wrangell for repairs. Divers and inspectors will look at the vessel today.

WASHINGTON (AP) - House Democrats have reserved millions of dollars worth of television advertising in 31 congressional races in all corners of the country. The list includes 19 seats currently in Republican hands, from Connecticut to Alaska, with two each in Ohio and New Mexico. In all, the documentation obtained by The Associated Press shows the DCCC has reserved nearly $35 million in advertising to begin in September and October.

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) - An executive for the Denali pipeline project says the venture is not a publicity stunt. Bud Fackrell is the executive for the joint venture by oil giants BP PLC and ConocoPhillips. Fackrell told state lawmakers yesterday (Thursday) that the project is the real deal. But some lawmakers aren't so sure and let him hear about it during legislative hearings on Gov. Sarah Palin's gas line proposal. Denali is a competing project to Palin's preferred choice: that proposed by TransCanada Corp. under the state's Alaska Gasline Inducement Act.

News Minute: No winds yet...Oil way up...Exports are too

Associated Press - July 11, 2008 10:03 AM ET

PARADISE, Calif. (AP) - There's an unexpected break for firefighters in the Sierra Nevada foothills of California. Some strong winds that were expected today haven't materialized yet. To the north, residents in the Spokane (spoh-KAN') Valley of Washington state have fled a fire that destroyed eight houses.

DETROIT (AP) - Family members say the bodies of Army soldiers Sergeant Alex Jimenez and Private Byron Fouty (FOW'-tee) have been found in Iraq. Those two and another who is already confirmed dead were kidnapped in May of last year after they were ambushed south of Baghdad.

(AP) - Oil prices are spiking again to end the week, reaching nearly $147 a barrel today. Tensions in Iran and violence in Nigeria have helped ratchet up the price. The higher oil prices, along with troubles at mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, are sending stocks lower. The Dow lost more than 100 points in the first few minutes.

WASHINGTON (AP) - The United States' trade deficit narrowed in May as exports climbed to all-time highs. The gap was down 1.2%, even though imports also reached record highs thanks in part to high oil prices. Forecasters were expecting the gap to widen.

WASHINGTON (AP) - House Democrats plan to spend millions of dollars on television ads in 31 congressional races scattered around the country this fall. The list of targets includes 19 seats that are currently held by Republicans.

PENINSULA CLARION

Cruise ships now handling trash 1 piece at a time

By PHIL HERMANEK Peninsula Clarion

With one of its main focuses being the environment, the $1.35 billion cruise industry is now physically handling each and every piece of trash with an eye toward recycling, according to an Alaska Cruise Association executive.

President John Binkley told Soldotna business leaders on Tuesday most of the waste generated on cruise ships plying Alaska waters is off-loaded in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and "66 percent of the waste is recyclable."

The three main focuses of the cruise industry in Alaska are economics, environment and community relations, Binkley said, and new, more stringent regulations make dropping garbage off the back of the ship a thing of the past.

Binkley said cruise ship crew members now collect all the ship's trash, separate it as selectively as sorting out different colors of glass, and ready it for off-loading and recycling.

Some innovative ways of handling cruise ship trash are now being sought after by municipalities, according to Binkley. One such device is a "bulb eater," he said, describing a program for safe disposal of fluorescent light bulbs.

The tubes are inserted into a drum and hazardous chemicals including mercury are stripped from the tube as it is crushed. The glass can then be safely recycled, Binkley said.

He also said waste water regulations passed in 2002 by the Alaska Legislature are "the most stringent regulations in the world."

Following a $400 million investment, cruise ships now have "the best water treatment systems in the state," which enable ships to treat water to a level that it can be continually discharged.

One measure of treated water quality is presence of fecal coliform, Binkley said.

"Cruise ships are held to 14 colonies of fecal coliform per milliliter," he said.

As a comparison, he said the city of Kenai limit is 200 colonies per milliliter; in Soldotna it's 100; and in Seward, the limit is 50,000 colonies per milliliter.

Binkley said cruise ships create far lower volumes of waste water than municipalities,

mainly due to the cost of purchasing the water from port cities and the cost of treating it.

In terms of the amount of copper present in discharged water, Binkley said cruise ships are held to standards much more severe than municipalities.

Interestingly, he said cruise ships in Alaska buy water from cities such as Ketchikan with a copper content of 878.47 parts per billion, but are not allowed to discharge water with more than 3.1 ppb.

"What that means is, if I take a glass of drinking water and pour it into the ocean from the ship, I'm doing something illegal," Binkley said.

A former riverboat captain and gubernatorial candidate, Binkley said another of the association's focuses is economics.

He said the industry employs 14,500 people in Alaska and generates $565 million in labor and $120 million in state revenue in addition to purchasing $4.3 million worth of Alaska seafood to serve to passengers in state.

In 2007, the cruise industry directly spent $13.1 million in the Kenai Peninsula Borough. The 160,000 passengers who visited the borough spent $11 million and the cruise lines spent $2.1 million.

To enhance the industry's economics as they pertain to Alaska, Binkley said efforts are being made to serve produce from the Matanuska-Susitna Valley on board cruise ships, and to get more businesses active with shore-side commerce.

"We've produced a video to teach small businesses how to become more active," Binkley said.

The association will be conducting a ship environmental tour Aug. 22, aboard the Radiance in Seward. Binkley invited Soldotna Chamber of Commerce members to sign up for the tour, which will give them a rare behind-the-scenes look at a ship's trash processing and recycling system.

Nikiski fire station funds move ahead

By Hal Spence | Peninsula Clarion

A state grant worth nearly $3.4 million targeting a project to build a new fire station in Nikiski cleared all but the last legislative hurdle at Tuesday's Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly meeting.

Ordinance 2008-19-01 was approved for introduction by the assembly and set for a public hearing on Aug. 5.

Nikiski Fire Station No. 2 is 37 years old and inadequate for community emergency response, according to Nikiski Fire Service Chief James Baisden.

"Renovation of the existing structure is cost prohibitive due to existing electrical and plumbing issues, such as water drainage, leaking roofs, and rotting structural supports," he told the assembly in a memo June 26. "The original structure was built as a community center for Nikiski and was never designed or built to properly handle equipment and personnel to serve the community emergency medical and fire response needs."

The borough requested the state funding and the Legislature included the $3.375 million in the FY 2009 capital budget signed by Gov. Sarah Palin on May 9.

Capital Projects Director Kevin Lyon said Wednesday that the borough was looking at a couple of possible sites and doing some preliminary environmental work on those. Once started, he said, the project would take about a year to complete both design and construction.

Just when the project might proceed once the assembly acts to formally accept and appropriate the grant will depend on the outcome of another ordinance that would eliminate grant funds from the calculation of a project cost with regard to the $1 million spending cap that now prevents the assembly from approving expenditures in excess of that amount without a public vote.

If that difficulty is addressed, design work could begin in August, Lyon said. If a public vote were required first, the delay would put the project well into the fall.

The measure of concern is Ordinance 2008-17 (substitute), introduced by Assemblyman Gary Superman and Borough Mayor John Williams last month, which got the first of two public hearings Tuesday. The second is scheduled for Aug. 5.

That ordinance would alter the effect of a 2005 citizen initiative that capped the amount the assembly could spend without a public vote at $1 million. It was backed by the Alliance of Concerned Taxpayers (ACT) and approved by voters by a narrow margin of 140 votes. It also required a 60-percent majority approval by the electorate before the assembly could expend in excess of $1 million.

The terms of the ballot measure made federal, state and other grant funds part of the $1 million calculation. The new ordinance would eliminate grant funds from the $1 million calculation, meaning the cap would be applied only to borough funds.

Under state law, a successful initiative ordinance can be changed by assembly action after two years have passed since its approval by voters.

The measure also would exclude grants from such other organizations as the Rasmussen Foundation, the Denali Commission and others, from future cap calculations. Another provision would increase the amount that could be spent without voter approval in the North Peninsula Recreation Service Area from $500,000 to $1 million.

Ruby Denison, of Ninilchik, prime sponsor of the 2005 ballot measure, recently called the new ordinance a "creative accounting" method meant to circumvent the 2005 vote. Tuesday, ACT members James Price and Vicki Pate spoke against the new ordinance.

Supporters of the measure testifying Tuesday included Ryan Smith, CEO of Central Peninsula General Hospital Inc., and Baisden.

Superman, of Nikiski, said rising construction costs make the cap problematic for the borough, and the inclusion of grant funds in that calculation "significantly impairs the borough's ability to receive grant funds for capital improvement projects."

Requiring a costly, time-consuming public vote to expend grant funds could delay projects, increase costs, and perhaps hamper legislative efforts to make grants in the first place, Superman said.

"In my view, the best interest of the borough would be served by excluding grant funds from the code provision," he said.

MAT-SU FRONTIERSMAN

Fourth of July accident claims fourth victim

By Andrew Wellner

Frontiersman

MAT-SU -- Alaska State Troopers said Thursday that the July 4 accident that claimed the lives of three Princess Lodge workers has claimed a fourth.

According to spokeswoman Beth Ipsen, Matthew Holmes, 20, of Hudsonville, Michigan, died Wednesday night of his injuries.

Holmes and Christopher Niles, 19, also of Hudsonville, were the only two who survived the crash near Mile 131 Parks Highway in Trapper Creek.

Holmes was taken to Providence Alaska Medical Center, after the crash, Niles to Alaska Native Medical Center.

Nathan Pollard and Jerry Luzzi, both 21, of California, died on scene. William Bradley, also 21, of California, died on the way to the hospital.

All five lodge workers were thrown from the red 2003 Infiniti as it rolled off the highway. None were wearing seatbelts.

Troopers say they believe the group was heading from Talkeetna back to the Princess Mt. McKinley Lodge when the accident occurred. Troopers were called to respond at 8:33 p.m.

Ipsen said troopers believe that alcohol was a factor in the crash, but only accounts that the men were seen partying at a Talkeetna-area park prior to the accident.

New MEA board tightens reins

By Andrew Wellner

Frontiersman

PALMER — Matanuska Electric Association has a new look to its board of directors and a new president.

Lois Lester of Eagle River was elected without objection Tuesday by other board members to

loud applause from the audience. Valley resident Peter Burchell was seated for another term and Janet Kincaid replaced former board president Lee Jordan.

Lester thanked the board for choosing her and said she would strive "to be true to the MEA members."

Lester is serving her third term on the board, having been first elected in 2000. According to an MEA press release, she is the longest-serving member on the board.

Also chosen as officers were David Glines of Eagle River to serve as vice president and Burchell, a Wasilla resident, to serve as secretary/treasurer.

The board elects its officers after each yearly election to serve one-year terms.

Tuesday also saw the swearing in newly elected board member Kincaid and of Burchell to a new term. Both were elected March 1. Burchell and Glines thanked Jordan Tuesday for his years of service and lamented the fact that nobody had thought to prepare him a plaque or other recognition.

The newly constituted board wasted no time in getting down to business.

Lester had barely taken her position as president before proposing changes to the board's policies, the most striking of which seemed to ask utility General Manager Wayne Carmony to take more direction from the board and exercise less discretion.

The change wasn't universally welcomed.

"I need to study this before I know how much I want to swallow," board member Larry DeVilbiss said.

Glines agreed with DeVilbiss, saying he objected to moving forward with changes so quickly. The changes eventually passed with Glines and DeVilbiss in opposition.

Next, Burchell took his turn, making a motion that the co-op's bylaw committee be dissolved and reconstituted. Under his proposal, sitting members who wish to remain on the committee would have to reapply.

Burchell's motion stemmed from a dispute this last election cycle when Lester and others noticed that the co-op's bylaws say committee members serve three-year terms. By that measure, only one committee member has not seen her term expire.

"I don't think you guys should beat yourself up over this," Carmony said, noting that his reading of the rule is that a committee member sits until replaced and thus the current committee members, though most of their terms are expired, are still legally serving.

"I think," Lester said of Burchell's motion, "it's just been something that's in his craw and he wants to get it out."

Eventually the measure passed unanimously with Glines abstaining.

Work near Windbreak generates questions

By Andrew Wellner

Frontiersman

WASILLA — It seems Mayor Dianne M. Keller's comments at a recent city council meeting are making some residents take notice.

Evidence of the rumor mill's effects were apparent last week. Deputy Chief Greg Wood with the Wasilla Police Department said people spotted a handful of Wasilla officers working on equipment on one of the department's communications towers near the Windbreak Café. An Anchorage officer contracted to Wasilla's communications company was also present.

Since then, "We've had several calls here from people worried that we maybe did a raid at the Windbreak," Wood said.

Similar calls were fielded at the Frontiersman this week.

The comments he's referring to were made at a June 30 city council meeting in which Keller defended actions that led the council to call for her resignation regarding her dealings with Meritage Development LLC, a company working to develop two tracts of land close to the Windbreak. Addressing Annette Andres, owner of the Windbreak, Keller accused the café owner of making "degrading" statements about her. Andres had received a letter threatening eminent domain if she didn't cooperate with plans for nearby Sun Mountain Avenue. The letters prompted the investigation. Keller has said from the start she was reacting to safety concerns regarding the road.

Keller said that if she were the type of person Andres thought she was, she would have directed Wasilla police officers to run breathalyzer checks on anyone exiting the café, but she didn't.

Calls to the restaurant turned up no sign of a raid and attempts to reach the café's owners were not successful as of press time.

Officers conducting the maintenance work were not on Windbreak property, Wood said, adding the work had absolutely nothing to do with the café.

"We were working on some equipment out there and that's it," Wood said. "This stems, I believe, from the mayor's comments."

Wood said it's likely Keller's comments, which may have been taken out of context and sprinkled with a little imagination from Wasilla residents, have been spun through the local rumor mill, turning a maintenance call into something more sinister in the minds of some.

"We don't do business that way and we're going to continue to abide by the laws ourselves and continue to do right by the community," Wood said.

Since that June 30 meeting, Woods said he doesn't believe police have fielded any calls for service from the restaurant.

"If we do have a call we'll respond and deal with it like we normally do," Wood said.

WALL STREET JOURNAL

Democrats Counter Republicans

With a New Alaska-Oil Plan

By SIOBHAN HUGHES

July 11, 2008; Page A3

WASHINGTON -- House Democrats moved Thursday to counter a Republican push for more domestic drilling with a proposal that would increase oil production from areas of Alaska already open to drilling.

In recent weeks as the public outcry over high gasoline prices has built, Republicans in Washington have positioned themselves as champions of increased domestic energy production. Fearful of appearing obstructionist, Democrats are jostling to get in front of the issue.

"Democrats support increasing the domestic production of petroleum and other energy

resources," House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D., Md.) said Thursday.

The issue cuts both ways for Democrats. They don't want to alienate environmental-minded supporters who are against additional drilling, but they don't want to cede the issue of increasing oil supplies to the Republicans.

With gasoline prices at a record-high $4.11 a gallon on average across the nation last week, Americans are growing eager for action. A Rasmussen Reports survey in June showed 67% of Americans support deepwater energy exploration -- with 64% expecting it will lower gas prices -- while a CNN poll published last week showed 73% of Americans favor more exploration of deep ocean energy resources far off U.S. shores.

Republicans have repeatedly accused Democrats of failing to increase supplies. Republicans have pushed for increased drilling off the coast and in environmentally sensitive areas such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The Democrats' plan would speed up production in the National Petroleum Reserve, an area in Alaska already approved for drilling but where so far much of the land hasn't been leased. "This administration has been dragging its feet on leasing those areas," Mr. Hoyer said.

Currently, five companies -- ConocoPhillips, BP PLC, Anadarko Petroleum Corp., Total SA and FEX LP -- have drilled in the area. The Bureau of Land Management has been selling leases roughly once every two years. The result is that only 26 wells have been completed in an area that Democrats estimate could ultimately produce about 10.6 billion barrels of oil.

Ruth McCoard, a spokeswoman for the Bureau of Land Management, said the government isn't obligated to stick to a two-year schedule for offering leases in the National Petroleum Reserve, but "it's just the way it has actually fallen." She said the schedule "depends on when we can actually offer those lands. We're having a lot of land-use planning going on."

Under the Democratic proposal, the Bureau of Land Management would be required to offer leases annually. Because oil companies are already active in the area, oil could potentially be produced more quickly than in other areas recently proposed for new exploration, such as off the coast of Florida in the Gulf of Mexico.

Democrats are also considering ways to encourage the construction of both an oil and a natural-gas pipeline to speed delivery from Alaska to the lower 48 states. One option: the oil pipeline could potentially link up with the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline, which delivers oil from Prudhoe Bay.

The construction of a natural-gas pipeline, which is expected to cost more than $30 billion, is a hot topic in Alaska. Companies have floated two major proposals since the beginning of the year, although both have significant hurdles to clear. Construction of an oil pipeline hasn't been widely discussed until the Democratic proposal Thursday.

Currently, oil from Alaska's North Slope travels down a pipeline built in the 1970s to the port of Valdez, where it is put on tankers and ferried to the West Coast and other destinations. Oil production in the North Slope has been declining in recent years, creating ample capacity on the pipeline for new sources of oil to be carried to market.

OTHER PAPERS

Letters to the Editor/Opinion

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS

(Letters to the Editor/Opinion)

Alternative energy key to Alaska's future

STEVE HAYCOX

COMMENT

(07/11/08 00:27:23)

It would be remarkable if Warren Buffett were to solve America's energy problem, and Alaska's. It would be remarkable because Buffett pulled out of Alaska's gas line sweepstakes even before the real contest began. Yet Buffett is a person who thinks "big" and clearly; he wants to free America from dependence on foreign oil, not by more drilling

but by getting serious about alternative energy.

Buffett has been pushing wind-generated power for most of the past decade, and he's beginning to get results. Just last month, one of his companies signed an agreement, approved by the requisite government bodies, to bring to 800 turbines a giant wind-generator farm at Walnut, Iowa, between Des Moines and Omaha. The power will boost the percentage of Des Moines power consumption provided by wind. There are now giant wind farms all across the American Great Plains, from North Dakota (near Edgeley) to Texas (on King Mountain, near McCamey). There are several in Iowa, a new one being built in Kansas (near Montezuma), and in Minnesota (near Pipestone), among others. The wind that drove the "dust bowl" is fast blowing in a new U.S. energy era.

Gov. Palin's approval of $25 million of state oil revenue for transmission lines from the CIRI project on Fire Island, which involves Chugach Electric, ML&P, Homer Electric and Golden Valley Electric, should be seen as a mere beginning. Thirty-three turbines there can generate 100 megawatts of power, 25 percent of Anchorage's current expenditure. Buffett's new Iowa project will generate 310 megawatts.

Paul Jenkins, Arliss Sturgulewski and Gail Phillips have recently called for new, bold thinking about Alaska's future. They point out that we have had big ideas in the past but have sometimes lacked visionary leadership and often big money. Now we have some money, and they hope for the vision. Sturgulewski and Phillips call for the development of comprehensive policies on energy and transportation. So far, so good.

But we need to think farther than a road to Nome and more creatively than the development of Arctic coal. Buffett understands that we cannot solve our energy crisis with fossil fuels alone. So do others.

Elizabeth Kolbert, who has written cogently for New Yorker magazine about the melting of Arctic sea ice and the impact of global warming on Alaska, recently described a number of alternative energy projects in Denmark and other European countries. In addition to wind power, there are experiments in biomass burning, heat-recovery systems, extra-thick insulation, multi-use solar panels and others. All of these required not just money, but overcoming the natural conservatism of ordinary citizens who'd always done things the same way. What that took, Kolbert chronicled, was finding a few people willing to step out and take the lead instead of waiting for their neighbors to make the first move. It took the courage to be different.

Alaska should be filled with such people. Residing on the "last frontier," and not giving "a damn how they do it Outside," are phrases meant to capture some of Alaska's uniqueness. For non-Native Alaskans, living over a thousand miles north of the rest of the country in a land not yet fully developed, itself suggests a willingness to be labeled "different." For Native Alaskans, taking pride in Native heritage and living, even part of the time, in remote villages and participating in subsistence harvesting of resources are powerful statements of positive difference. Thinking, and acting, non-conventionally ought to be second nature to Alaskans.

But realizing new ideas takes something more than just the courage to be different; it takes creative thinking. Many of the energy-efficient ideas Kolbert observed had been worked out in universities and research institutes. Alaskans should put a substantial portion of the "new" money from high oil prices into the state university, equitably distributed. Very often, though hardly exclusively, innovative, non-conventional approaches to persistent challenges come from researchers who have the time, incentive and

encouragement to think big, and to think freely, without the constraint of specifically directed contracts.

Jenkins, Sturgulewski and Phillips are right in urging Alaskans to think big and innovatively. Buffett is right in pushing alternative energies that can be made cost effective. Alaska would be right to take heed.

Letters to the editor (7/11/08)

(07/11/08 00:27:24)

It's time to show us the money

Push the button! Mail the energy relief checks. The $1,200 or more should be paid immediately to Alaskans.

The longer government waits, the higher the cost of heating oil rises. Do legislators fathom how the cost of heating oil hurts people? The committees and hearings are dental floss on a broken jaw. Our high electric costs, water rates and property taxes are a crime. That money gushing through Juneau belongs to Alaskans.

Residents are frustrated and depressed, anxious and angry. It's a ripple effect: less money to spend, businesses suffer. It's ridiculous that our money remains beneath the desks of legislators sipping martinis and playing the party game.

Alaska retirees can burn their houses down to stay warm or leave. Alaska residents and their children are our immediate investment. Push the button!

Parents don't want to take their children from this wonderful community -- but little choice is left. Twenty-five-hundred dollars to fill a 500-gallon tank, and billions sitting in banks and markets making billionaires richer. Shameful.

Certainly we need to invest in development. But first, help people. It's their money. If I directed funding I would send $5,000 to each resident, millions to each community so towns and villages could start on an even keel.

Juneau, local representatives, Gov. Palin, send the checks, push the button.

-- J. Claude Cruikshank

Fairbanks

Have dignity; resist giveaways

An Anchorage Daily News editorial announces that Alaskans are now asking for help in the way of direct grants for weatherization and subsidies for energy consumption.

When did we all become wards of the government and unable to provide for ourselves? All families with incomes of less than $78,000 per year now qualify as indigents?

We are forced to depend on government for basic shelter?

How many of you are going to sign up for this freebie and surrender your sense of individual self-reliance and dignity?

Don't you think we could provide for ourselves if the municipality was not extorting approximately $5,000 per year in taxes for each home in Anchorage?

Wake up, Alaskans. A government large enough to give you everything you want is also big enough to take away everything that you have earned.

Bob Dylan put it in prose: "Steal a little and they throw you in jail, steal a lot and they make you King" (a legislator, mayor ...).

How many of you have the decency to resist goodies taken by force from someone else and offered to you?

-- David Biesemeyer

Anchorage

Some ideas were rotten apples

We have all seen the bumper sticker asking God for another oil boom, promising this time we won't **** it away. Alaska will need an updated version if state leaders follow the advice of former legislators Gail Phillips and Arliss Sturgulewski to "revisit big, bold ideas of the past" (July 3 Compass). Many of the big-spender ideas that were undertaken before didn't live up to their lofty promises. Examples include the Delta Barley Project and the Healy Clean Coal Project. Some "big ideas such as the Susitna Dam" were so bloated that even with political pork there wasn't enough funding to begin. The thread running through many of these failures is that the project was based on political whims and decisions, not solid feasibility analysis.

Certainly, not all big ideas from the past were losers. Creating the Permanent Fund, which converts nonrenewable resource wealth into renewable financial wealth, and AHFC, which corrects market imperfections in Alaska's banking sector, were fundamentally sound ideas that have been well managed and successful.

Alaska's future is faced with global complexities. What we need to wind our way through is not political Pollyanna, but prudent leaders who have the skills to spot the rotten apple and the courage to pluck it from our barrel of ideas. Regardless of how well it's polished, a rotten apple never tastes very good.

-- George Matz

Fritz Creek

Read checklist before marrying

Holy cow! A checklist for being happy in marriage! Where was this article when I was getting married for the first time ... or the second ... or the third. Reading the "choosy" article by Maureen Dowd made me laugh out loud. It also made me gasp in disbelief. Here was a list of every goofball decision I ever made about "love" and/or marriage (not that my parents/family/friends didn't try to educate me!). I'm relatively sure that if I had been required to sign a copy of the article saying that I had read and understood, I might have made some different choices. No, I wouldn't; I was "in love." Of coure, if the exes had read the same article and measured me, none of us would have become statistics. Ah, hindsight ...

I'd sign this with all my married names, but wouldn't want to embarrass any of the fine gentlemen that I tied my star to, bless their hearts.

Seriously, thanks for publishing the column. If it saves someone the heartache of a bad marriage or a nasty divorce, then the ADN has contributed something useful. In the meantime, in my case, here's hoping that with age comes some wisdom. I'm bronzing it, in case I ever get the urge again. Eek.

-- Lynn Sutton

Anchorage

Bears aren't our only hazards

As I read Mr. Yonkin's letter "Bears don't belong in the city," I wondered why the debate on bears always seems to be an "us or them" argument. We live in a place where bears exist

very close to humans without trouble the vast majority of the time.

When someone gets hurt or killed, some of us cry, "Get rid of those bears!" But children and adults both are hurt and killed in car accidents many times more than anyone is hurt by a bear. Why don't we cry, "Get rid of those cars"? Cars are a hazard of living in the city.

We choose to live with many things that are hazardous every day without giving them much thought. If you choose to live in Alaska, you have chosen to live on the edge of a wilderness where bear encounters are a possibility. Whatever the hazard, reasonable precautions should be taken, with the knowledge that sometimes they may not be enough.

-- Cynthia L. Lyons

Anchorage

Kill the bears and more will come

Nature abhors a vacuum. If a concerted effort is made to kill all the bears in the Anchorage area, others will come to fill the void. Then what? Kill more bears. These bear killers gripe and groan and expound illogical ideas. But they offer no reasonable or even thoughtful solutions. They just run off at the mouth.

Would these bear killers rather make Anchorage a gated city? Erect a 15-foot-high fence all around the city with gates on the highways for cars. That will keep the nasty bears away and slow down traffic. And probably cost multi-million dollars in increased taxes (the homeowners would love that).

I have been up close and personal with several bear maulings. They are not pretty. I live in bear country. I approach each step outside my door with bear awareness. These bear killers need to get a grip on life. If not, get your pacifier and curl up in a corner with your favorite blankie.

-- Phil Weber, EMT

Cooper Landing

Professor shows his ignorance

Dr. Randall J. Gee, professor emeritus, Cleveland State University, is certainly entitled to the opinions enthusiastically expressed in his recent letter regarding the sporting and culinary values of northern pike -- no matter how much his notions reflect a bland, peculiarly Midwestern aesthetic that is the equivalent of a boneless, skinless, boiled

breast of chicken with mayo on white bread.

It should be pointed out however, that despite his seemingly impressive professional credentials, and the fact he presents himself as an avid sport fisherman, Dr. Gee's factual knowledge of Alaska's fisheries resources is woefully deficient. Dr. Gee might be surprised to learn that contrary to his assertion that the rainbow trout "is not native to Alaska," it is, in fact, a naturally occurring (that is to say "native") species found across extensive regions of not only Alaska, but the broader Pacific Rim. In Alaska, resident and anadromous populations of rainbow trout are found from the Panhandle in the Southeast to Kuskokwim Bay in the southwest and are indigenous to numerous drainages in between.

It is ironic that while Dr. Gee views ADF&G efforts to eradicate the pike from the Alexander Lake/Creek system as "criminal," the pike fishing he has enjoyed there is almost certainly the direct result of an actual criminal act: that is, the unauthorized, illegal transplantation of northern pike to the system.

n Mike Cooney

FAIRBANKS NEWS MINER

(Letters to the Editor/Opinion)

Energy options

In-state gas pipeline question

Published Friday, July 11, 2008

Alaskans need to see a rational business plan before the state goes any farther with the undefined "partnership" on an in-state gas pipeline.

The news conference announcing the "partnership" Monday was premature, at best. The confusing mix of contradictory claims and perceptions needs to be dealt with immediately by the Palin administration to present a clearer picture to the public.

The state and the parties should have worked out some of the key details before announcing a partnership that so far seems to exist in name only.

Enstar is studying a pipeline along the Parks Highway from Anchorage north to Fairbanks and to the North Slope. The Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority wants to build a spur line from Delta to Anchorage via the Richardson and Glenn highways.

At the news conference, the Palin administration said the Richardson and Glenn route is the preferred alternative. But Enstar and ANGDA do not appear to be in sync on this.

ANGDA wants $25 million of state money to study building a line from Delta to Southcentral. It is talking about building a plastic pipe from Delta to Fairbanks — that line would possibly carry gas from Cook Inlet to Fairbanks.

We need to see a stronger case for the Richardson-Glenn route other than ANGDA's continual promotion of that option.

Likewise, we need to learn if the Parks Highway route might be less expensive and therefore require less of a state subsidy.

It's not right to risk state resources based on a series of "ifs" and "maybes."

For starters, the proponents need to reach consensus on where the gas for this pipeline would be coming from, who would pay for it and how much of a subsidy will be required.

We need a much broader discussion.

The big motivation is how to get lower-priced energy in the Interior. There are many ways to do this. At a time when we have a temporary abundance of cash, we cannot abandon the normal restrictions that reduce the chance of entering into agreements that are not the best use of our resources.

We need to consider whether subsidizing a multi-billion dollar pipeline is superior to, say, building the Susitna hydroelectric project or selling royalty oil at a lower price.

As to whether the gas for this pipeline would come from Cook Inlet or the North Slope foothills, that should be nailed down before anyone starts building a pipeline.

It's not enough for the state to speculate that building a pipeline from Anchorage to Fairbanks will somehow unleash an immediate and successful exploratory boom that will allow new supplies of Cook Inlet gas to be flowing into Fairbanks in 2013.

It's also not enough to say we can build a pipeline from Anchorage to Fairbanks and if, by 2013, new Cook Inlet reserves are not on line, then we'll spend more billions to go to the North Slope.

That doesn't strike us as a business plan. It strikes us as a concept that needs more work.

Not feeling rich

John Lawrence, North Pole

Published Friday, July 11, 2008

July 6, 2008

To the editor:

So the state has made a cool $10 billion this year on oil. Way to go state! Yes, that is billion with a B.

That's nice, but correct me if I am wrong — I was led to believe that we, the residents of Alaska, were the state. With that in mind, I really don't feel much like a billionaire. No, I just scratch my head and try to figure out how to pay all these inflated prices for utilities, food, gasoline and diesel and anything else I need to survive in the Interior of Alaska.

All this time our "elected officials" are slobbering over this vast amount of money the state has made trying to figure out just how to spend it.

I have a novel idea. Put some of it back into the pockets of the residents. Why not take our oil and run it through the refinery. Yes, the one right here in North Pole. At that

point, the refinery fees would be added along with the state tax (yes, keep the state fuel tax intact) and the federal taxes then we would have a product for a price we could afford. In turn, the entire economy for the state of Alaska would take an enormous leap ahead. Yep, it is too simple. No bunch of politicians could ever agree on anything that simple that would only help the people and not the politicians. What was I thinking ... ?

JUNEAU EMPIRE

(Letters to the Editor/Opinion)

Crabby over fishing regulations

The Empire's recent picture of dungeness crab being caught by commercial operators has now impacted my household.

I have been fishing crab for more than 20 years in my 14-foot skiff and most recently in my newer aluminum boat. I have had to travel farther and farther (now more than five miles to set my three pots) and use galvanic timed releases to deter crab theft.

Now, this season my favorite cove (which you can just about throw a rock across), was overwhelmed by a commercial boat from Petersburg with 15 commercial pots. My last crab catch was seven keepers - and I used three gallons of gas.

The Department of Fish and Game says to complain to the Board of Fish. They meet in January every year. Oh, by the way, the deadline for complaints and appeals is in April! So, I guess it's a two-year deal if anything can be done.

It's too bad fish and game, with all its staff and stats, isn't more pro-active. Or maybe it should be that the Board of Fish should be more pro-active.

The part that really miffs me is when the fish and game guy in Juneau said it wouldn't matter if there were a million pots in the Northern Lynn Canal, the Board of Fish has regulatory power to limit the commercial guys.

Well, I guess I had better savor what is left. From the way it's going, there'll be no more dungeness in Haines, just like the king salmon fishing was decimated here, and the king crab in Juneau, and the shrimp in Taiya Inlet. I guess that's what we should expect, being the last ones on the totem (Lynn Canal).

The commercial decimation continues in Icy Straits, Excursion Inlet and the like. Before fish and game has nothing left to manage, maybe we should put it in charge of the mosquitoes! Cheers!

Norm Smith

My turn: SEACC victory likely to be overturned

A few months ago, I predicted on this page that the U.S. Supreme Court wouldn't hear Southeast Alaska Conservation Council's lawsuit against the Kensington Mine. Was I ever wrong - and that's good. Now, if I have an ounce of credibility left at reading judicial tealeaves, I will venture that Coeur has all but won its case.

Here's what Juneau people should know. It takes four justices of the Supreme Court to accept a case for review - and justices almost never vote for review unless they think a decision should be reversed. It only takes five Justices to reverse and the court reverses 90 percent of 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals cases it hears. In addition, the court almost never hears a case where the federal government is the primary party and argues against review - as happened here. Something is going on, and that something is an almost certain reversal of SEACC's victory. That's a very good thing.

It's a good thing because SEACC never really had a point to make. They never advocated anything to help the environment - in fact what they pushed was environmentally detrimental. They just wanted to stop a mine and get a win. After all, without winning, SEACC is nothing.

SEACC's legal case argued that a mine couldn't convert "waters of the United States" directly into a tailings disposal facility. Waters of the United States include lakes and wetlands. And tailings facilities include dry tailings and tailings ponds. Of course SEACC's phony public façade was that dry tailings on wetlands were OK - even while their lawyers were making the opposite case in court. What they really wanted was the power to say yea or nay to mining proposals. Baloney. They aren't the government.

SEACC dishonestly claimed to the people of Juneau and Alaska that Coeur's proposal was reversal of past practice - a change that allowed a mine to just dump waste into a pristine lake with no controls and a throwback to the bad old days. The Supreme Court heard otherwise. Both Red Dog and Fort Knox had been permitted to do what SEACC said was never done - convert waters of the United States into a tailings pond. Pogo, Greens Creek, and Rock Creek had avoided the problem by carefully converting the waters of the United States into "uplands" before placing their tailings. This was expensive, but it avoided the phony legal pitfall that SEACC had raised. Coeur could have done the same thing at Lower Slate Lake. In the end, SEACC's case was really just about raising mining company costs and promoting SEACC.

While I may disparage SEACC's crusade against Kensington, Coeur has not. That, apparently, would be too messy. Or they may think the facts are too complicated for ordinary people to understand. I don't think they are. Most people can appreciate the difference between a "mount garbage" and a facility that looks like a lake. I think it's worth knowing that a water discharge permit with stringent standards was required and issued for discharge from the treatment facility. The idea that Coeur was just dumping waste shouldn't have been allowed to stand.

And people really needed to know that most of the damage of construction of the Lower Slate Lake facility has already taken place. SEACC posted the pictures on its Web page, but Coeur's lawyers argued to the 9th Circuit that area was all but pristine. One would have expected the opposite. What sense is there in digging up a new area for the paste tailings when the Slate Lake area has already been clear-cut and dug up?

In the end, Coeur has a great case to make for its Lower Slate Lake facility. If, as expected, the Supreme Court upholds the permit, the result will be good for the mine and good for the environment. Juneau needs to know this. We shouldn't be left with the idea that the Supreme Court is ramming something bad down our throats.

But let me make one last prediction. Coeur won't make its case to the public. Too bad. The Supreme Court isn't going to do anything more than uphold sensible law and worthy past practice. This is something Juneau should support.

• Eric Twelker is a Juneau attorney and geologist.

Alaska editorial: Buy Alaska Grown

Should it matter to you if the peas on your dinner table came from Alaska or California? Is buying locally worth a few extra cents here and there?

We think supporting our Alaska farmers isn't just sensible. It isn't just the right thing to do. We see it as a way to grow a green Alaska that is less vulnerable to food security issues, less dependent on imported food and less detached from the sources of its food.

With Alaska's fresh bounty reaching area farmers' markets, vegetable stands and local retailers, today is a good day to make a personal commitment to buy Alaska Grown.

Lettuce, crisp bunches of radishes and the succulent green, leafy crops have been a hit at the farmers' markets for a few weeks. Zucchini, cucumbers, tomatoes and strawberries - and an ever-lengthening parade of enticing crops - are available now, too. Even as summer gives way to fall and fall to you-know-what, Alaska potatoes and carrots remain available.

Buy Alaska Grown and you are buying from your neighbors, who picked the crops from their own fields. Many grow their crops naturally without chemicals and pesticides. Each of them will answer your questions about their commitment to raising produce that is Alaska Grown.

Alaska has its own fresh milk with an expanding line of dairy products expected soon. There are sources of Alaska meats, goat cheese, eggs, birch syrup, herbs, honey, oils, jams and jellies. Then there are the nonfood products - yarns, soaps, nutraseuticals, flowers, biodiesel, etc. It's a long list. The state's new Food and Farm Products Directory is an Excel file downloadable and filterable from the Division of Agriculture Web site, http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/ag.

Buying local foods mean you get better nutrient content, fresher product and you've spared the environment the impact of thousands of miles of transportation.

We are proud to support our Valley and our state in many ways. Like shopping locally, buying Alaska Grown just makes sense.

What better way to celebrate our Valley's agricultural heritage than to support the farming industry?

Alaska editorial: Iditarod needs help

T he Iditarod attracts the top dogs. Among those signing up last week for the 2009 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race were five winners of the event, including 2008 champion Lance Mackey. Overall, 68 hopeful mushers pledged to brave the grueling 1,100-mile sled dog race in an event at Wasilla's Iditarod headquarters.

A longtime international draw for the Mat-Su Valley, the Iditarod continues to be a strong event that generates tourism and interest in Alaska and our local communities. Not only does the Iditarod generate worldwide media coverage at its Anchorage ceremonial start and the Valley restart, hosting an off-season sign-up blowout keeps more year-round attention on the race.

That next year's competitors seem willing to pay an increased entry fee - $4,000 for 2009, up $1,000 over this year's fee - is a good sign of the Iditarod's strong base of interest within the sport of mushing. In addition to the fee increase, operational expenses have cut the overall guaranteed purse from $935,000 in 2008 to $660,000 next year.

We're pleased to see such a strong turnout and support from Iditarod mushers and hope the increased entry fee and decreased prize money from the event won't hamper the race's overall participation in 2009. With recent increases in fuel prices and other services race organizers can expect to pay, it's understandable some belt-tightening would be in order.

At the same time it's costing mushers more to feed, train and care for their dogs. While finishing in the money in the Iditarod has unparalleled cachet in the sport of dog mushing, the dogs and mushers have to eat, and not all of them have deep-pocketed sponsors like some of the headliners.

We love the Iditarod and watching greats like Mackey and other former champions Mitch Seavey, Jeff King, Martin Buser and Rick Swenson. But it's a tough spot to raise the fee 25 percent and cut the purse.

Cabela's and Wells Fargo Bank are major corporate sponsors of the Iditarod. While we appreciate keeping the Iditarod as one of the last, great Alaska adventures, it may be time to consider more corporate sponsorships to keep the event's financial shortfalls from the competitors.

The Iditarod has steadied itself financially in recent years. Now it's time to take another good, hard look at those companies that would like to buy into this world-class event and carefully consider what they can bring without diluting the character of the race.

The world's top mushers are loyal to the Last Great Race, but can the field afford to return for long if this year's hiccup of paying more for a smaller purse becomes an annual occurrence?

We hope we don't have to find out.

OTHER OP-EDs

(Letters to the Editor/Opinion)

VOICE OF THE TIMES

Palin says guilty
until proven innocent

IMMEDIATELY AFTER Sen. John Cowdery was charged with bribery and conspiracy yesterday, Gov. Sarah Palin whipped out a press release assuming that he was guilty.

The rule of thumb in fairness is supposed to be "innocent until proven guilty," but not for our governor these days.

"It was disturbing to learn that another public official has been charged with violating the public trust," she wrote. "I urge Senator Cowdery to step down, for the good of the state."

"Today's news is a good reminder that we must continue to be vigilant in defending Alaska's sovereignty against those who would undermine it . . .

(cont'd from front page) in an attempt to sell out Alaskans. As we move forward, let me remind everyone that this administration is committed to putting Alaskans and their interests first, as we develop our resources in a responsible and ethical manner.

"We are on the right path. I am confident that path will be made more clear and obstacle-free as justice prevails in the ongoing FBI investigation. Like many Alaskans, I look forward to closure on this disturbing chapter in our state's history."

Could it be that Cowdery, an elderly man who often uses a walker, was going to vote against Palin's beloved AGIA scheme?

Palin partners

skeptical on

gasline claims

MORE EVIDENCE is piling in that Gov. Sarah Palin is being disingenuous in her proposal to build a pipeline to carry gas from Cook Inlet to Fairbanks.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner reports that the skeptics include, to varying degrees, the state's proposed partners in what Palin calls "AGIA Lite" and others who would most directly benefit, if the proposal were real.

The critics include Enstar, with comments by spokesman Curtis Thayer, and Fairbanks Natural Gas President Dan Britton. Harold Heinz, CEO of the Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority, also has his doubts.

"Do we want to roll the dice, or do we want to . . .

(cont'd from front page) spend the money and build a line to the (North Slope) foothills?" Thayer asked. "We know there is gas on the North Slope. The thing is, we don't have the gas in Cook Inlet. The gas does not exist in Cook Inlet."

The News-Miner quoted Heinze as saying the general view is that Cook Inlet has "lots of potential" but he and Enstar are somewhat more skeptical.

"There is no doubt there are some real problems," Heinze told the reporter. "On the other hand, the administration is very confident, and they are the landowner." That was a good-soldier response but hardly a ringing endorsement of the bold new idea that the governor is so excited about.

Enstar and ANGDA were announced as partners in Palin's AGIA Lite in her press conference on Monday.

Britton said he also has questions about Palin's proposal. Noting that it's already a struggle to get contracts for Cook Inlet gas, he added: "It's hard for me to understand what the justification might be for a multi-billion investment when you're unable to secure a longer gas supply."

What about aid to

Alaska's communities?

WE ARE SCRATCHING our heads about the new state proposal to spend $21 billion on alternative energy, trying to make sense of it.

We find it unimaginable that the Legislature would look at such a seemingly crackpot scheme but has still not seriously considered sharing state largesse with the local communities.

Larger cities like Anchorage are still paying horrendous property taxes, others are paying high sales taxes, and some villages are laying off their few employees — including police officers — because of empty treasuries. The $1,200 energy checks will help, but not much. The need is much greater than that.

This seems to be one more indication that Alaska's government priorities have gone astray, dangerously so.

Unknown

From: Perry, Kristina Y (GOV) [/O=SOA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=KYPERRY]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 12:41 PM
To: Katz; John W (GOV)
Cc: Nizich; Michael A (GOV); 'gov.sarah@yahoo.com'
Subject: Re: Energy Letter/Sunday

Thanks John. I will print for the Governor.

----- Original Message -----

From: John Katz <jwkatz@ALASKADC.org>

To: Perry, Kristina Y (GOV)

Cc: Nizich, Michael A (GOV); ExternalEmailgsp

Sent: Fri Jul 11 06:07:18 2008

Subject: Energy Letter/Sunday

I wanted to make sure that you had the latest version of the proposed energy letter (attached). This is probably the 12th version of the letter. As you'll recall, Sam has previously provided written briefings and updates.

I don't know what the dynamics will be when the Governors get together. For me, this has primarily become an academic exercise that will most likely have little impact on federal policy. In order to resolve substantial differences among Governors, the draft has become progressively less sharp in expression.

Please let me know if I can help further. Hope you're having some fun.

John W. Katz

Director of State/Federal Relations

and Special Counsel to the Governor

jwkatz@alaskadc.org <mailto:jwkatz@alaskadc.org>

(202) 624-5858

>>> On 7/11/2008 at 9:45 AM, in message <LYRIS-697-135997-2008.07.11-09.48.08--jwkatz#alaskadc.org@talk.nga.org>, "Quam, David" <DQuam@NGA.ORG> wrote:

To: Washington Representatives and State Federal Contacts

Re: Latest version of NR Committee Energy Letter

Attached please find the latest version of the NR Committee Energy letter. Copies will be provided to your governors at the Governors Only session on Sunday, July 13.

The only changes to the letter are the addition of compromise options and language addressing oil shale that was agreed to by Colorado, Wyoming and Utah.

Please call my cell phone with any questions: Privileged or Perso

David C. Quam

Director, Federal Relations

National Governors Association

(202) 624-5309

dquam@nga.org

Unknown

From: gov.sarah@yahoo.com
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 4:56 PM
To: Colberg; Talis J (LAW)
Subject: Re: exxon

Thanks so much Talis. I was asked by a reporter just the other day about our letter and if we'd received any response. Thanks!

Sent from my BlackBerry device from Cellular One

From: "Colberg, Talis J (LAW)" <talis.colberg@alaska.gov>
Date: Fri, 11 Jul 2008 15:35:08 -0800
To: <gov.sarah@yahoo.com>
Subject: exxon

Dear Governor Palin,
Two further notes on the Exxon letter I just forwarded:

Privileged or Personal Material Redacted

Talis

Unknown

From: John Katz [jwkatz@ALASKADC.org]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 6:07 AM
To: Kris Perry
Cc: Mike Nizich; Sarah Palin
Subject: Energy Letter/Sunday

I wanted to make sure that you had the latest version of the proposed energy letter (attached). This is probably the 12th version of the letter. As you'll recall, Sam has previously provided written briefings and updates.

I don't know what the dynamics will be when the Governors get together. For me, this has primarily become an academic exercise that will most likely have little impact on federal policy. In order to resolve substantial differences among Governors, the draft has become progressively less sharp in expression.

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>
> Please call my cell phone with any questions: Privileged or P
>
> David C. Quam
> Director, Federal Relations
> National Governors Association
> (202) 624-5309
> dquam@nga.org
>
> ---
> You are currently subscribed to [reps] as jwkatz@alaskadc.org.
> To unsubscribe, send a blank email to leave-135997-697I@talk.nga.org.

Unknown

From: Colberg, Talis J (LAW) [/O=SOA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=TJCOLBERG]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 3:35 PM

To: 'gov.sarah@yahoo.com'

Subject: exxon

Dear Governor Palin,

Two further notes on the Exxon letter I just forwarded:

Privileged or Personal Material Redacted

Talis

Unknown

From:	Colberg, Talis J (LAW) [/O=SOA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=TJCOLBERG]
Sent:	Friday, July 11, 2008 3:25 PM
To:	'gov.sarah@yahoo.com'
Cc:	Nizich; Michael A (GOV)
Subject:	FW: Exxon Valdez Letter

Dear Governor Palin,

Attached is Exxon's response to my letter. Privileged or Personal Material Redacted Privileged or Personal Material Redacted Privileged or Personal Material Talis

-----Original Message-----

From: Sy-Lumba, Ide T (LAW)

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 3:21 PM

To: Colberg, Talis J (LAW)

Subject: re: Exxon Valdez Letter

Please let me know if unable to open. Thanks.

-----Original Message-----

From: State of Alaska Dept. of Law [mailto:infosys@law.state.ak.us]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 3:19 PM

To: Sy-Lumba, Ide T (LAW)

Subject:

This document was digitally sent to you using an HP Digital Sending device.

Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 3:12 PM
To: Smith; Lynne M (GOV)
Subject: FW: Chamber/Americas Executive Forum Press Release on Amb. Robert Dieter, U. S. Ambassador to Belize

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From: Gil Cisneros [mailto:gil@chamberoftheamericas.com]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 2:02 PM
To: ******Gil Cisneros
Subject: Chamber/Americas Executive Forum Press Release on Amb. Robert Dieter, U. S. Ambassador to Belize

The Chamber of the Americas Executive Forum Breakfast presented the Honorable Robert J. Dieter, U.S. Ambassador to Belize, on July 10, 2008. Ambassador Dieter, a former Clinical Professor of Law at the University at the University of Colorado-Boulder Law School, relayed that prior to his appointment by President George W. Bush as the nation's diplomatic representative to the Central American country, he had limited knowledge of the intricacies of international diplomacy, having devoted his professional life to pursuit of legal scholarship.

However, Ambassador Dieter's tenure has offered a thorough education in the art of diplomacy and an appreciation of Belize, the people and possibilities. He informed the audience about the cultural and commercial allure of Belize. While the potential for business opportunities are without restraint, the U.S. ranks number one in foreign trade with the beautiful but tiny nation (the population compares to Boulder County — approximately 300,000 people).

According to Ambassador Dieter, the primary catalyst for the close relationship between the two countries is a shared commitment to democracy. Belize, a former British colony, is unique in Latin America with English being the predominant language. Along with a shared British influence, the country's commitment to democracy, carried over from its British colonial days, resembles American government. This, he said, explains the easy relationship with Americans. "There is very close cultural connections between the U.S. and Belize," he stated.

The stable political environment offers an additional attraction to American investors. Coupled with Belize's popularity with U.S. tourists, the country is ripe with commercial prospects for expanded American trade. Belize boasts numerous attributes. Ambassador Dieter highlighted the Mayan ruins, rain forests, snorkeling, surfing (Belize has the second largest barrier reef in the world), and natural beauty. An added bonus is the people's disposition. "Americans are amazed at how friendly Belizeans are to them," he said.

The Chamber of the Americas presented Ambassador Dieter in its efforts to facilitate and increase American interest in trade with Belize. CEO Gil Cisneros led a commercial visit to the country earlier this year and plans to return this fall as an emissary between U.S. and Belizean businesspeople in The Chambers' efforts to enhance commercial trade between the U.S. and Belize.

For further information about possible trade opportunities with Chamber of the Americas and Belizean businesses, please contact Gil Cisneros at 303-462-1475.

Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 10:06 AM
To: Mason; Janice L (GOV)
Subject: FW: Other

-----Original Message-----

From: WebMail@govweb.alaska.gov [mailto:WebMail@govweb.alaska.gov]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 12:20 AM

To: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)

Subject: Other

Web mail from: Mr. Joel Symons

address: 7225 Bearfoot Dr. Anchorage AK 99502

248-2089

MESSAGE:

To Governor Sarah Palin

I am. Joel Symons and to Congrats to your new baby. And to you. Sarah for being a Mother to your Baby. Congrations

From Joel Symons

joel1974@gci.net

Unknown

From: Nizich, Michael A (GOV) [mike.nizich@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 1:16 PM
To: Katz; John W (GOV); Palin; Sarah (GOV sponsored); Perry; Kristina Y (GOV)
Cc: Mason; Janice L (GOV); Kelly; Russell T (GOV)
Subject: RE: Congressman Boehner's Alaska Trip

I will defer to the Governor on this and her desire to attend but the 19th is going to be difficult as the Governor will be in Anchorage that day for an event.

From: John Katz [mailto:jwkatz@ALASKADC.org]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 11:42 AM
To: Palin, Sarah (GOV sponsored); Perry, Kristina Y (GOV)
Cc: Mason, Janice L (GOV); Nizich, Michael A (GOV); Kelly, Russell T (GOV)
Subject: Congressman Boehner's Alaska Trip

I have made contact with the office of the House Minority Leader. The bottom line is that the Governor is invited to have dinner with Mr. Boehner and his entourage Saturday (July 19th) or Sunday in Fairbanks.

The staff recommends Saturday, because the House members will not be as tired, and the Governor could also offer some welcoming remarks. Sunday is less preferable for several reasons.

I also asked whether the Governor could actually accompany the entourage to the North Slope. The staff is checking with Mr. Boehner and will get back to me as soon as they can.

Please advise whether either July 19th or 20th is a possibility. I will let you know as soon as I hear about the North Slope portion of the trip.

P.S.
I understand that the Governor will meet with the Republican Challengers group on July 17th. So, there should be no conflict with Mr. Boehner's trip.

John W. Katz
Director of State/Federal Relations
and Special Counsel to the Governor
jwkatz@alaskadc.org
(202)624-5858

Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 10:15 AM
To: Wilken; Jessica M (GOV); Mason; Janice L (GOV)
Subject: FW: Questions regarding the SEACC

From: Paul H. Strohm, Jr. [mailto:crmpro123@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 8:05 AM
To: Palin, Sarah H (GOV)
Subject: Questions regarding the SEACC

Dear Governor Palin,

I am exploring the Southeastern Alaska Conservation Coalition (SEACC) Executive Director position and am interested in hearing your thoughts on the Tongass issues including:

Are the SEACC critical initiatives in line with the voters and the state's priorities?
Your opinion of Russell Heath and his tenure as Executive Director at SEACC?
Can results from the coordinated efforts of the state and SEACC be improved? If so, how?
Do you believe the state resources available for economic development are being fully utilized in the Tongass? If not, what would you recommend?

Thank you in advance for your feedback. I assure you these questions are for my personal education only and will not be shared.

If possible, I'd like to discuss these issues and any others you deem pertinent via phone at your convenience. I will try to call you after receiving your responses to the questions above. Or if you'd prefer to chat vs. communicate using email, please provide a good time to reach you. I am in the Eastern time zone.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Paul Strohm
317-752-1615

Unknown

From: John Katz [jwkatz@ALASKADC.org]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 11:42 AM
To: Palin; Sarah (GOV sponsored); Perry; Kristina Y (GOV)
Cc: Mason; Janice L (GOV); Nizich; Michael A (GOV); Kelly; Russell T (GOV)
Subject: Congressman Boehner's Alaska Trip

I have made contact with the office of the House Minority Leader. The bottom line is that the Governor is invited to have dinner with Mr. Boehner and his entourage Saturday (July 19th) or Sunday in Fairbanks.

The staff recommends Saturday, because the House members will not be as tired, and the Governor could also offer some welcoming remarks. Sunday is less preferable for several reasons.

I also asked whether the Governor could actually accompany the entourage to the North Slope. The staff is checking with Mr. Boehner and will get back to me as soon as they can.

Please advise whether either July 19th or 20th is a possibility. I will let you know as soon as I hear about the North Slope portion of the trip.

P.S.
I understand that the Governor will meet with the Republican Challengers group on July 17th. So, there should be no conflict with Mr. Boehner's trip.

John W. Katz
Director of State/Federal Relations
and Special Counsel to the Governor
jwkatz@alaskadc.org
(202)624-5858

Unknown

From: Nizich, Michael A (GOV) [mike.nizich@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 5:08 PM
To: gov.palin@yahoo.com; Perry; Kristina Y (GOV)
Subject: FW: Kenai Peninsula: KSRM news gas line poll

FYI if someone hasn't sent this to you already.

From: Davis, Susan M (GOV)
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 3:41 PM
To: Balash, Joseph R (GOV)
Cc: Nizich, Michael A (GOV)
Subject: Kenai Peninsula: KSRM news gas line poll

FYI:

Do you support Governor Palin's proposed bullet line from the Cook Inlet to the Fairbanks area?

Yes

No

Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 3:13 PM
To: 'fact275@gmail.com'
Subject: RE: Other

Thank you for writing to Alaska Governor Sarah Palin. The concerns, opinions, and/or information you have sent are important and valuable to the Governor. Although she is unable to respond to each and every email herself, your message has been received and is being reviewed by the appropriate staff person in this office who can best address your need, suggestion, or comment.

-----Original Message-----

From: WebMail@govweb.alaska.gov [mailto:WebMail@govweb.alaska.gov]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 1:47 PM

To: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)

Subject: Other

Web mail from: Mr. Chris Husing

address: 350 E. Taylor Street Apt 1201 San Jose CA 95112

408.821.2284

MESSAGE:

Governor Palin

I just want to write of my admiration for you and your family. I wish you were my Governor! As a Republican, what hope I have left for our party lies in someone like you. I wish you Godspeed and I hope that when you work in Alaska is finished, you were work for the nation at large.

fact275@gmail.com

Unknown

From: Perry, Kristina Y (GOV) [kris.perry@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 1:32 PM
To: Nizich; Michael A (GOV); Katz; John W (GOV); Palin; Sarah (GOV sponsored)
Cc: Mason; Janice L (GOV); Kelly; Russell T (GOV)
Subject: Re: Congressman Boehner's Alaska Trip

John, will an early dinner on the 20th in Fairbanks work? The picnic concludes at 3pm. I realize that's too early but close to it would be helpful, i.e. 4:30.

----- Original Message -----

From: Nizich, Michael A (GOV)

To: Katz, John W (GOV); Palin, Sarah (GOV sponsored); Perry, Kristina Y (GOV)

Cc: Mason, Janice L (GOV); Kelly, Russell T (GOV)

Sent: Fri Jul 11 13:16:02 2008

Subject: RE: Congressman Boehner's Alaska Trip

I will defer to the Governor on this and her desire to attend but the 19th is going to be difficult as the Governor will be in Anchorage that day for an event.

From: John Katz [mailto:jwkatz@ALASKADC.org]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 11:42 AM

To: Palin, Sarah (GOV sponsored); Perry, Kristina Y (GOV)

Cc: Mason, Janice L (GOV); Nizich, Michael A (GOV); Kelly, Russell T (GOV)

Subject: Congressman Boehner's Alaska Trip

I have made contact with the office of the House Minority Leader. The bottom line is that the Governor is invited to have dinner with Mr. Boehner and his entourage Saturday (July 19th) or Sunday in Fairbanks.

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P.S.

I understand that the Governor will meet with the Republican Challengers group on July 17th. So, there should be no conflict with Mr. Boehner's trip.

John W. Katz

Director of State/Federal Relations

and Special Counsel to the Governor

jwkatz@alaskadc.org <mailto:jwkatz@alaskadc.org>

(202)624-5858

Unknown

From: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored) [governor@alaska.gov]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 1:30 PM
To: Mason; Janice L (GOV)
Subject: FW: Other

-----Original Message-----

From: WebMail@govweb.alaska.gov [mailto:WebMail@govweb.alaska.gov]

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 11:55 AM

To: Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)

Subject: Other

Web mail from: Ms. Tina Whisler

address: P. O. Box 1773 Palmer AK 99645

907-745-6795

MESSAGE:

Governor Palin: I have an e-mail clip that I would like to share with you and your husband about what a difference you two have made by having Trigg. Rusty my husband and I love all children but we are particually fond of Downs Syndrome children and have worked with many and truly love them. I called your parents house to maybe e-mail it to them and they could show you. It is a true story on how this one young Down Syndrome boy made a difference in many people's lives. I personally want to Thankyou for having the same convictions that I have about handling whatever Heavenly Father chooses to give us. Trigg will bring you "unmeasurable" amounts of joy not only for you but your whole entire family and he will teach everyone who gets to know him the meaning of "uncondtional love". Sincerely Tina M. Whisler

whistleberry@gci.met

Unknown

From: ddonkel@cfl.rr.com
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 10:22 PM
To: Bruce D Webb
Cc: Jerry Hodgden; nickstepo@gmail.com; Rick in Fairbanks; 'Jim Gottstein'; Jim White; Balash; Joseph R (GOV); Palin; Sarah H (GOV); Nizich; Michael A (GOV); Leighow; Sharon W (GOV)
Subject: Re: Hello, hello.... is anybody home?

Dear Bruce

I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL BUT.........I believe Gov. Palin and Commission Irwin and Alaska's will come through with a new Legislature to will allow Alaskans to drill and produce and profit for the first time since statehood.

I KNOW WHAT YOUR THINKING AND NO I AM NOT DREAMING.

I have great news It seems Mr. Joe Balash has been directed by Gov. to set up a meeting with us "would be profitable competitors". I have asked the Gov. to hire Jerry Hodgden to consult with the Her and her staff to show how the Kansas model can cure the many anti competition laws put on the books.

WHAT IF GOVERNOR PALIN HIRES JERRY HODGDEN TO CONSULT ALASKA ELECTED LEADERS HOW TO ADOPT KANSAS OIL AND GAS LAWS THAT ALLOWS COMPETITION WITH THE MAJORS.

KANSAS DOES NOT PRICE IT'S CITIZENS OUT OF THE OIL AND GAS DRILLING AND PRODUCING AND SELLING OIL AT A PROFIT BUSINESS. KANSAS DOES NOT KILL SMALL OIL AND GAS COMPETITOR WITH RED TAPE SO THE MAJORS CAN CONTROL THE MARKETS IN MY OPINION!!

IF THIS HAPPENS THEN WILL YOU HAVE FAITH THAT PALIN TRULY CARES ABOUT ALASKANS BEING ABLE TO DRILL FOR OIL?

I would not give up on Governor Palin because she is great and I predict she will make Alaska the largest producing oil state in the nation with small independents making this happen also I predict Gov. Palin be President one

day.

Daniel K. Donkel

Ph: 386-226-4344

Cell: 407-375-8500

Fax: 386-252-3703

ddonkel@cfl.rr.com

546 Rio Vista Ave.

Daytona Beach, Florida 32114

----- Original Message -----

From: "Bruce D Webb" <bwebb@aurorapower.com>

To: <ddonkel@cfl.rr.com>

Cc: <sharon.leighow@alaska.gov>; <mike.nizich@alaska.gov>; "Governor Palin" <sarah_palin@gov.state.ak.us>; <joe.balash@alaska.gov>; "Jim White" <jimwhite@satx.rr.com>; "'Jim Gottstein'" <James.B.Gottstein@gottsteinlaw.com>; "Rick in Fairbanks" <bluemax@gci.net>; <nickstepo@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 1:45 PM

Subject: Hello, hello.... is anybody home?

> Dan,
>
>
>
> That was the Governor's auto response. I have received a dozen of
> them
> over
> the past year.
>
>
>
> Nice letter, but I am afraid it is being delivered to deaf ears. I am
> starting to wonder what the Governor's agenda is, as she , and

> particularly

> Joe Balash, have NEVER replied to me, and I sent Joe a message last
> week -

> asking him directly what his purpose was, because I have been
> including

> him

> in all the oil and gas e-mails that deal with the injustices being

> propogated in several departments. I seriously do not have any idea
> what

> his role in State government is. I made it a return receipt and
> "notify

> when read" e-mail. He got it, read it, and of course, ignored it.

> (attached) I offered to sit down with him over coffee and discuss his

> role,

> what he could do for me,and I would have asked him if there was any
> way I

> could help him. I wanted to know whether or not I was wasting his
> time by

> including him in all the e-mails. Apparently I am.

>

>

>

> Sarah is most likely devoting the majority of her time in justifying
> her

> AGIA legislation, which is now being countered not only by
> ConocoPhillips

> with the Denali proposal, but by Governor Knowles with a different

> approach,

> and Governor Hickel with yet another. The woes of the independents
> are

> insignificant in comparrison to what the majors are delivering and
> what a

> gas line would mean to Alaskans - it's sad but true. We just don't
> matter

> enough to be heard. All we can do is keep trying, unfortunately,
> after

> trying for so many years - we start sounding like fanatics - which
> adds to

> the administrations desire to ignore us.

>

>

>

> This is especially frustrating for me, having served within the Stae
> for

> over 20 years, more than half of which in the Division of Oil and Gas.
> I

> have the unique experience of knowing the "process" from the inside

> looking

> out, and now - after almost four years of oil and gas consulting and

> managing the land and regulatory affairs for one of the only
> independents

> in

> Alaska still managing t survive - from the outside looking. I can
> point

> out

> a hundred deficiencies and ambiuities in State regulations that would
> be

> EASY to fix and make the "process" more fair and condusive for
> competition

> and exploration. The problem lies in that it serves no ones political

> agenda to change things. The administration(s) would rather focus
> their

> attention on "NEW" legislation and administrative process that will
> focus

> the spotlight on them and their prospective acheivements, instead of

> fixing

> the old statutes and regulations that create and propogate the problems.

>

>

>

> In several discussions with you, Jim, Rick and others, I have come to
> the

> conclusion that if we want to change things, we are going to have to
> start

> a

> public awareness campaign and educate the people of Alaska. Only when
> we

> are able to bring these issues out in the open to the general public
> and

> compete for the "spotlight" with AGIA. Denali, ACES, and the litany of

> other

> "important" issues, will we be noticed and taken seriously. Check out

> this

> website:

>

>

>

> http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/LEGISLATURE/ombud/standarz.htm

>

>

>

> There are 16 standards that the State Ombudsman uses to investigate

> complaints against state officials, departments and Divisions. I was
> in a

> meeting yesterday with the DCOM, DOG, F&G, DEC and COE. 12 of those
> 16

> standards were violated. Once a complaint is filed with the
> Ombudsman,

> they

> MUST investigate it, and publish it on their website. Perhaps it is
> time

> to

> start using the State's own system to bring these issues to the

> forefront -

> and everytime a complaint is filed, copy all the media agencies in the

> state... this would cost us nothing. More than half of these
> standards

> are

> relevant in the Corsair Unit Expansion Decision alone.

>

>

>

> Anyway, I have ranted anbout my disappointment with the administration

> enough. I hope the weather and view in Florida is making you smile.

>

>

>

> Take care,

>

>

>

> -Bruce

>

>

>

> ______

>

> From: ddonkel@cfl.rr.com [mailto:ddonkel@cfl.rr.com]

> Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 1:04 AM

> To: Kari Spencer; Sarah Palin; Governor Sarah Palin; Governor Palin;

> Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)

> Cc: Jim Winegarner; Bob & Faith Warthen; Tom Walsh; Bill VanDyke; Stan

> Snyder; Pat Shaw; Senator_Thomas_Wagoner@legis.state.ak.us;

> Senator_Lyda_Green@legis.state.ak.us;

> Senator_Lesil_McGuire@legis.state.ak.us;

> Senator_Gary_Stevens@legis.state.ak.us;

> Senator_Charlie_Huggins@legis.state.ak.us;

> Senator_Bert_Stedman@legis.state.ak.us; Robert Pledger; Dorothy
> Pledger;

> David W. Lappi; joe.balash@alaska.gov; Stuart Doshi;

> rep.david.guttenberg@legis.state.ak.us; Kevin_Banks; Vladimir Katic;

> jimwhite; Rick Wagner; Jerry Hodgden; Bruce D. Webb; Lt. Gov. Parnell;

> David

> Boelens

> Subject: Re: Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges: FBI

> investigations

> into Alaska politics | adn.com

>

>

>

> Dear Gov. Palin or Who ever replied. I hope this was not a computer

> responds

> you sent to my letter below!

>

>

>

> Why have I never received one responds from the Governor on these oil
> and

> gas matters after almost a hundred letters from me to help stop oil
> and

> gas

> corruption in Alaska and help cause fair competition in Alaska from
> small

> oil companies against the Majors?

>

>

>

> Have you reviewed your oil and gas lease sales history and have you
> noted

> that my "Danco" companies or I (DANIEL K. DONKEL) have been one of

> Alaska's largest and longest (since 1983) oil and gas lease
> customers in

> many Cook Inlet lease sales and on the North Slope?

>

>

>

> Have you also noted that I helped with others indirectly cause
> millions of

> barrels of new oil production in the Cook Inlet at Redoubt Shoals oil
> and

> gas field that created many Alaskan jobs and royalty and other
> valuable

> income to the State for benefit all Alaskans?

>

>

>

> Also, do you know I have supported, along with Rick Wagner and others,

> Gov.

> Palin's efforts to help Alaska to be more oil and gas productive and
> have

> tried for decades to help increase oil and gas competition from the
> small

> oil and gas companies that have been apparently shut out of Alaska
> profit

> making business for decades by the State's subject oil and gas
> corruption

> or

> injustice?

>

>

>

> Can I ask one favor? If yes, then may I ask that Rick Wagner, Bruce D.

> Webb,

> Paul Craig, David Boelens, Jerry Hodgden, Jim White and me (if all
> are

> agreeable / others may be included if they are schedulable) to meet
> with

> Gov. Palin to find solutions to this oil and gas corruption and bad
> oil

> and

> gas laws that has keep small oil companies and Alaskans from
> competition

> profitably for well over three decades?

>

>

>

> We are all small Alaskan oil men with well over one hundred year of

> combined

> Alaska oil and gas experience and we only want one hour to meet with Gov.

> Palin to talk about this subject corruption and how the small oil and
> gas

> competitors can benefit Alaska just as they do in Kansas and many
> other

> producing oil State's in the lower 48 and Canada.

>

>

>

> May I respectfully ask for a meaningful and respectful response of a

> simple

> "yes" or "no" to have this group or any one from this group meet with Gov.

> Sarah Palin for one hour by phone or in person to help Alaskans and
> small

> oil companies drill and produce more oil and gas for our nation?

>

>

>

> Daniel K. Donkel

> Ph: 386-226-4344

> Cell: 407-375-8500

> Fax: 386-252-3703

> ddonkel@cfl.rr.com

> 546 Rio Vista Ave.

> Daytona Beach, Florida 32114

>

> ----- Original Message -----

>

> From: Governor Sarah <mailto:governor@alaska.gov> Palin (GOV
> sponsored)

>

> To: ddonkel@cfl.rr.com

>

> Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2008 5:28 PM

>

> Subject: RE: Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges: FBI

> investigations

> into Alaska politics | adn.com

>

>

>

> Thank you for writing to Alaska Governor Sarah Palin. The concerns,

> opinions, and/or information you have sent are important and valuable
> to

> the

> Governor. Although she is unable to respond to each and every email

> herself, your message has been received and is being reviewed by the

> appropriate staff person in this office who can best address your
> need,

> suggestion, or comment.

>

>

>

>

>

>

> ______

>

>

> From: ddonkel@cfl.rr.com [mailto:ddonkel@cfl.rr.com]

> Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2008 1:22 PM

> To: Banks, Kevin R (DNR); Alfred James;
> irvin.t.joy@poa02.usace.army.mil;

> Chris Brecht; Danny S. Davis; Rick Wagner; Vladimir Katic; jimwhite;

> Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored); Palin, Sarah H (GOV); Paul L.
> Craig;

> Bruce D. Webb; David Boelens

> Cc: Senator_Thomas_Wagoner@legis.state.ak.us; Green, Lyda N (LAA);

> McGuire,

> Lesil L (LAA); Stevens, Gary L (LAA); Huggins, Charlie (LAA);

> Wielechowski,

> Bill (LAA); Stedman, Bert K (LAA); Richard A. Fineberg; Vladimir
> Katic;

> Balash, Joseph R (GOV); James Gottstein; Jerry Hodgden

> Subject: Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges: FBI
> investigations

> into

> Alaska politics | adn.com

>

>

>

> Dear Gov. Palin and Friends

>

>

>

> Please read the subject "BREAKING NEWS",

>

> "Cowdery indicted on two corruption charges: FBI investigations into

> Alaska

> politics" | adn.com

>

> Then read some solutions below. We want to give Gov. Palin and the

> Legislature information that can give reasons to allow small oil and
> gas

> companies to compete fairly in Alaska if new laws are passed ASAP!!

>

>

>

> What harm has all this corruption in Alaska politics done to Alaska's

> small

> oil and gas competitors over the last 14 year If Sen. John Cowdery was
> the

> GATE KEEPER AS REPORTED IN Anchorage Daily News? I quote " He's had

> powerful

> positions in the Senate leadership, including Rules Committee
> chairman,

> serving as gatekeeper for which bills reach the full Senate for a vote."?

>

>

>

> If this is true THEN HOW WILL GOVERNOR PALIN IDENTIFY AND UNDO THE

> APPARENT

> HARM HE AND OTHERS DID TO ALASKA'S SMALL OIL AND GAS COMPETITORS
> UNLESS WE

> ALL HELP GOV. PALIN AND LEGISLATURE NOW???

>

>

>

> In Alaska it has been reported by Dr. Paul Graig of Trading Bay Energy
> of

> Anchorage, that drilling permits are costing 76 time higher then the

> average

> cost in the lower 48 States and Canada!! With all this corruption in

> Alaska

> politics it seems possible that those who have most all Alaska's oil
> and

> gas

> markets may have bribed certain Alaskan Legislators to make laws to
> keep

> the

> smaller competitors out so they can control the markets. Alaska oil
> and

> gas

> laws need to be like Kansas and now is the time to do it, so Alaska
> will

> be

> more productive and competitive. See this link below for details on Dr.

> Craig's Testomony to the Alaska Legislature,

> http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_minutes_comm.asp?hse=H

> <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_minutes_comm.asp?hse=H&session
> =24&co

> mm=O!G&date=20051121&time=1310>

> &session=24&comm=O!G&date=20051121&time=1310

> .

>

>

>

> MAYBE Sen. John Cowdery HELPED BLOCK THE SENATE VERSION OF HB 53 AND
> OTHER

> BILLS IN ORDER TO KEEP THE SMALL COMPETITORS OUT OF ALASKA. MAYBE GOV.

> PALIN

> CAN CONSIDER THE KANSAS MODEL FOR DRILLING PERMITS SO SMALL OIL AND
> GAS

> COMPANIES CAN DRILL FOR OIL WITHOUT THE IMPOSABLE RED TAPE AND
> PERMITTING

> COST THAT WE HAVE KEEPING SMALL OIL COMPANIES OUT OF ALASKA.

>

>

>

> I suggest Gov. Palin and staff talk with Jerry Hodgden the Alaskan and

> Kansas consulting Geologist to help Alaska consider the Kansas model,
> he

> can

> be reached at geodogs@comcast.net . I believe he would want to help

> consult

> with Governor Palin and other Alaskan leaders to adopt the Kansas

> legislation this next session at a fee The Alaska State Government can

> afford. Please contact me if I can assist in any way possible.

>

>

>

> WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS? THANKS, DANIEL K. DONKEL at ddonkel@cfl.rr.com

>

> please click on this link for the full story;

> http://www.adn.com/news/politics/fbi/story/460986.html

>

>

Unknown

From: gov.sarah@yahoo.com
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 6:27 PM
To: Colberg; Talis J (LAW)
Subject: Fw: KABATA

Just fyi on KABATA request that I made quite awhile ago... for them to give me a briefing of where they are with the Knik project:

Sent from my BlackBerry® device from Cellular One

-----Original Message-----

From: gov.sarah@yahoo.com

Date: Sat, 12 Jul 2008 01:01:26

To: Leo Von Scheben<leo.vonscheben@alaska.gov>

Cc: Randy Ruaro<randall.ruaro@alaska.gov>; M Nizich<mike.nizich@alaska.gov>; Frank Bailey<ftb907@yahoo.com>; K Perry<kris.perry@alaska.gov>

Subject: KABATA

Hello Leo:

Whenever the KABATA folks want to give me a briefing on their progress, pls let me know and we'll sit and hear them out. Frank Bailey is taking names for board replacements to deal with Wuerch's resignation- he'll stay in touch with you as we get closer to naming someone to fill that slot.

Also, keep your fingers crossed on AGIA passage and the accompanying appropriations bill. Big budget for DOT and infrastructure improvements coming your way with affirmative vote. Say your prayers.

Sent from my BlackBerry® device from Cellular One

Unknown

From: Perry, Kristina Y (GOV) [/O=SOA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=KYPERRY]
Sent: Friday, July 11, 2008 6:20 PM
To: 'gov.sarah@yahoo.com'
Subject: Tomorrow...

Is unscripted, although interactive so there may be questions - general in nature and there will be oppotunity to weigh in on some polling (anonymously). The seating is as I explained, but Susan said Governor's can come and go as necessary. Both centennial sessions are recorded by CSPAN. The Gov's lunch tomorrow is for you and any family, no staff and security. Clinton will be at lunch.